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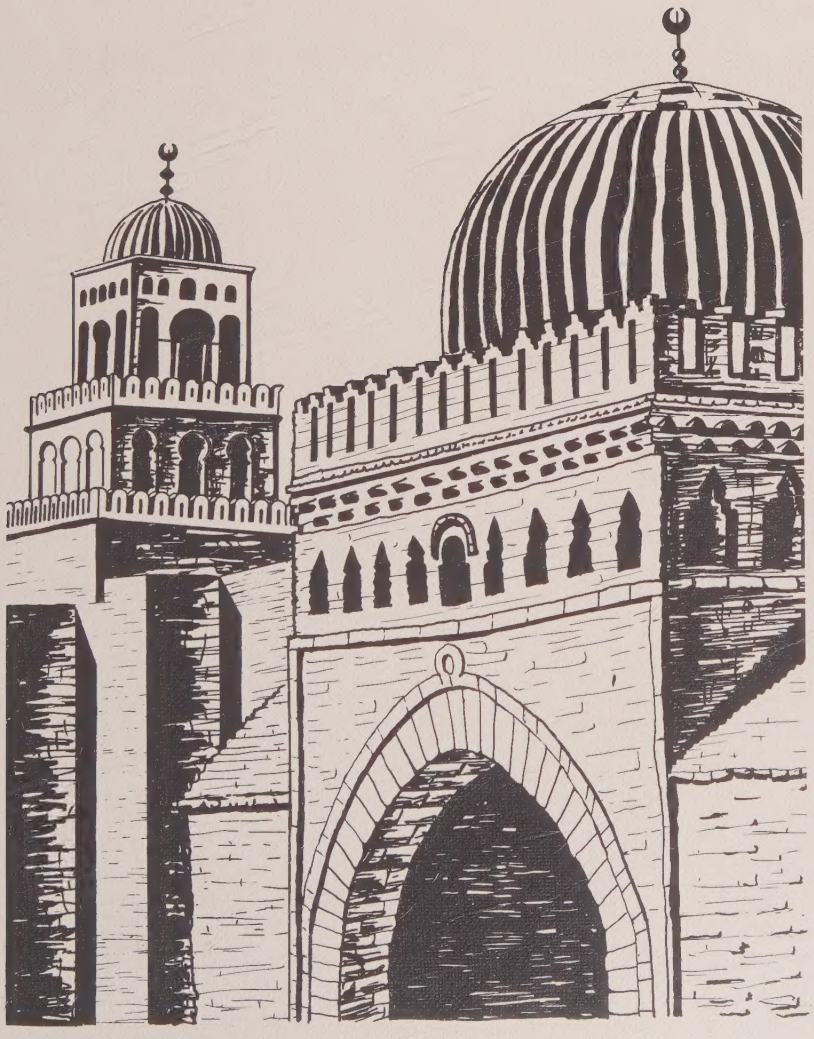

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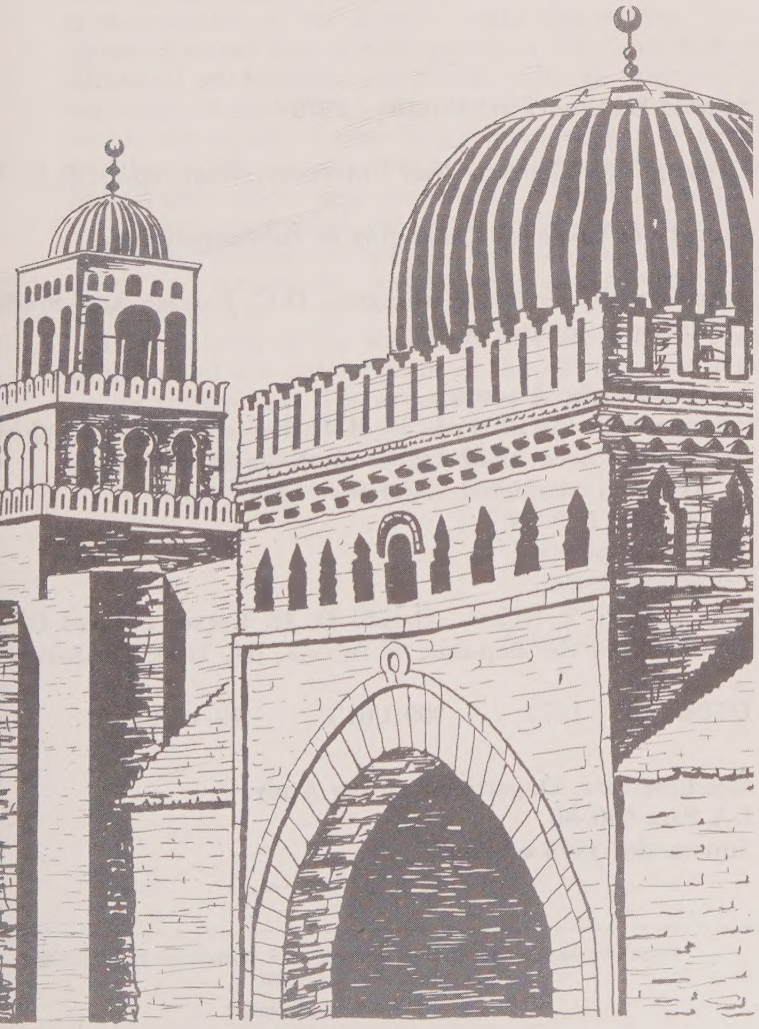
Tunisia, a country study

Foreign Area Studies
The American University
Edited by
Harold D. Nelson
Research Completed
September 1978



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On the cover: Towers of Sidi Uqba mosque in Al Qayrawan

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Foreword

This volume is one of a continuing series of books written by Foreign Area Studies, The American University, under the Area Handbook Program. Its title, format, and substance reflect modifications introduced into the series in 1978. The last page of this book provides a listing of other country studies published. Each book in the series deals with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its economic, military, political, and social systems and institutions and examining the interrelationships of those systems and institutions and the ways that they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic insight and understanding of the society under observation, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal of it. The study focuses on historical antecedents and on the cultural, political, and socioeconomic characteristics that contribute to cohesion and cleavage within the society. Particular attention is given to the origins and traditions of the people who make up the society, their dominant beliefs and values, their community of interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with the national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward the social system and political order within which they live.

The contents of the book represent the work of Foreign Area Studies and are not set forth as the official view of the United States government. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual or other changes that readers may have will be welcomed for use in future revisions.

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Special thanks are owed to Leslie Spencer, who prepared the illustrations for the chapter title pages under the direction of Michael T. Graham of The American University Department of Art. The inclusion of photographs in this study was made possible by the generosity of various individuals, private agencies, and government institutions.

Preface

This study replaces the *Area Handbook for the Republic of Tunisia,* researched and written in 1970 by a team composed of Thomas D. Roberts, Barbara Bamford, Sharon Camp, Grant V. McClanahan, and Taine Tompkins under the chairmanship of Howard C. Reese. At the time that work was finished, Tunisia had completed its first decade of independence from French administrative domination. Under the charismatic leadership of President Habib Bourguiba the country had gained a significant international reputation as an Arab state seeking to achieve national development goals through a pragmatic course that borrowed liberally from the concepts of free and centrally planned Western societies.

Tunisia: A Country Study views the progress, changes, and problems that have occurred through the second decade of Tunisian sovereignty. Like its predecessor, this new study is an attempt to treat in a compact and objective manner the dominant social, economic, and political aspects of modern Tunisian society. Sources of information used in its preparation include scholarly studies, official reports of governments and international organizations, journals, periodicals, and newspapers. Despite the sifting and analysis of a large quantity of primary and secondary source materials by the authors, a number of gaps in information necessarily remain on certain subjects. The reader's attention has been directed to these unavoidable exclusions at appropriate places in the text.

Available books, articles, and other documents that provide important amplification of subjects treated in this study are noted in the bibliographic paragraphs at the end of the chapters. Full references to these and other valuable sources studied by the authors in the preparation of this work are found in the Bibliography.

The literature of Tunisia is frequently confusing because of the tendency to mix English and French transliterations of Arabic words and phrases. For the most part the authors of this study have attempted to reduce this confusion by adhering generally to the system known as BGN/PCGN, one agreed to by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use. The placenames, again with minor exceptions to accommodate historic international familiarity, are those approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names in its official gazetteer of June 1964 and amended in August 1972 (see table A).

All measurements in the text are presented in the metric system. A conversion table will assist those readers who may not be familiar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix).

Harold D. Nelson

Table A. Place-Name Changes

Official[1]	Conventional[1]	Classical
Al Jamm	El Djem	Thysdrus
Al Kaf	Le Kef	Sicca Veneria
Al Mahdiyah	Mahdia	---
Al Marsa	La Marsa	---
Al Munastir	Monastir	Ruspina
Al Qasrayn	Kasserine	Cillium
Al Qayrawan	Kairouan	---
An Nafidah	Enfidaville	Mediccera
As Sukhayrah	La Skhirra, also Cekhira	Macomades[2]
Bajah	Béja	Vaga
Banzart	Bizerte, also Bizerta	Hippo Diarrhytus
Dougga	Dougga	Thugga
Halq al Wadi	La Goulette, also Gouletta	---
Hawmat as Suq	Houmt as Suq	---
Jarbah	Djerba	---
Madaniyin	Médenine	---
Majaz al Bab	Medjez el Bab	Membressa
Makthar	Maktar	Mactar
Nabul	Nabeul	Neapolis[2]
Qabis	Gabès	Tacapae
Qafsah	Gafsa	Capsa
Qibili	Kebili	Turris Tamalleni
Qurunbaliyah	Grombalia, also Peyrouton[3]	---
Safaqis	Sfax	Taparura
Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf	Sidi Youssef	Zama
Susah	Sousse	Hadrumetum
Tabarqah	Tabarka	Thabraca
Tabursuq	Teboursouk	Thubursicum
Talah	Thala	Thala
Tawzar	Tozeur	Thusuros
Tunis	Tunis	Tunes, also Thines
Zaghwan	Zaghouan	Onellana[2]

--- means not applicable.

[1] Reflect transliteration of Arabic names to French.

[2] Uncertain.

[3] After 1936.

Country

Formal Name: Republic of Tunisia.

Short Form: Tunisia.

Term for Nationals: Tunisians.

Capital: Tunis.

Flag: Rectangular red field with white circular portion in center; a red crescent and a red five-point star within the white area.

Geography

Size: About 164,000 square kilometers, with 1,600 kilometers of coastline.

Topography: Dominant natural feature is Dorsale mountain chain, which extends across north-central portion of country from northeast to southwest. North of the Dorsale, terrain is uneven and generally mountainous except where Majardah River, country's only major perennial stream, passes through a fertile floodplain.

Southward from the Dorsale, a region of semiarid plateaus gives way in extreme south to Tunisian portion of Sahara Desert.

Climate: Mediterranean climate prevails north of Dorsale, with only moderate seasonal variation. Occasional frosts in interior, but temperatures seldom drop below freezing. Dorsale acts as rain-shadow. Precipitation decreases progressively, and average temperatures increase southward. Extreme diurnal variation in temperature in Sahara. Heavy morning dew supplements scanty rainfall along central portion of eastern littoral to make possible prosperous olive and cereal culture.

Society

Population: Almost 5.6 million in 1975 census. Gross population growth rate for 1966 to 1975 was 2.6 percent annually, but substantial emigration each year of workers to France, Libya, and other countries reduced actual rate of growth to 2.3 percent. In early 1978 number of Tunisians living abroad estimated at more than 300,000. In 1975 there were 102 males per 100 females, and nearly 44 percent of population was under age fifteen. Some 47.5 percent of population was urban as compared with 40 percent in 1966 and 30 percent in 1956.

Ethnic Groups and Languages: Population mixture of Arab and indigenous Berber stock. Unlike other North African countries, where Berber population clusters continue to form important ethnic minorities, arabization of Tunisian Berbers has long been virtually complete. Arabic is official language, spoken by nearly all. French, however, spoken as second language by nearly one-half of population, remains principal language of business.

Health: Conditions of health and sanitation improving steadily, and most of formerly serious endemic diseases eliminated or under fair degree of control. Diseases of infancy and early childhood, however, remain major hazards; more than one-half of all deaths occur among children under age five. Shortage of medical personnel of all kinds pervails, particularly in rural areas. Numerous expatriate physicians, many from Eastern Europe, serve under contract with government and fill many rural posts.

Literacy: During late 1970s between 50 and 55 percent of population over age fifteen estimated literate. Rates reported at 47 percent for males and 18 percent for females in 1967, but in 1970s gap closing rapidly with increasing female school attendance.

Religion: Islam official state religion; observance of Sunni Islam almost universal.

Economy

Makeup: Consists of three sectors—state ownership, private enterprise, and cooperatives. Despite pace of development, coun-

try in 1978 faced substantial unemployment, balance-of-payments deficit, and increasing foreign debt burden.

Agriculture: Principal domestic crops are wheat, barley, oats, corn, sorghum, olives, dates, citrus fruits, and grapes; agriculture in general suffers from water shortages in many areas.

Industry: Crude oil, phosphates, olive oil, textiles, construction, and tourism. Industry has made sharpest growth of all economic sectors since independence.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): In fiscal year (FY) 1976 agriculture contributed over 20 percent of GDP, government services over 13 percent, and all other sectors the remainder.

Foreign Trade: Exports consist mainly of crude oil, phosphates, olive oil, and textiles. Imports—semifinished goods, machinery, consumer goods, and foodstuffs—generally exceed exports, causing a trade deficit that is customarily offset by remittances from Tunisian workers who have emigrated, tourism receipts, and new incoming capital from loans and investments. France is chief trade partner.

Currency: The Tunisian dinar (TD); in 1978 TD1 equaled US$2.47.

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: Nearly 2,000-kilometer system linking major mining and agricultural centers to the coast.

Roads: About 30,000 kilometers of roads in 1977, more than 10,000 of which were paved.

Ports: Six major seaports include Tunis-La Goulette, Bizerte, Safaqis, Susah, As Sukhayrah, and Qabis. Safaqis and Bizerte busiest ports in terms of cargo handled. Most imports enter through Bizerte and Tunis-La Goulette. As Sukhayrah a specialized port for petroleum exports, Safaqis for phosphates.

Airports: Five major airports and about a dozen minor airfields.

Telecommunications: All government owned; system adequate and being expanded.

Government and Politics

Form: Republic; the president, who serves as head of state and head of government, dominates political system. The only president has been Habib Bourguiba, whom the National Assembly (legislature) declared president for life in 1975. Day-to-day administration directed by the executive (government), comprising the prime minister and Council of Ministers (cabinet), both responsible to the president.

Legislature: Unicameral chamber of 112 seats, elected by direct, universal, secret suffrage, from lists compiled by Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD). Members of the legislature must be members of the PSD. The president may dissolve the legislature; a 1976 constitutional revision made executive (and ultimately the president) responsible to legislature through motions of censure.

Subnational Government Divisions: Eighteen governorates (provinces), each composed of several sectors; each sector organized administratively into delegations. The commune, created by central government decree, is the local government entity; it is administered by a popularly elected municipal council.

Legal System: Reflects sharia (sacred Islamic law), but substantially modernized by legislation after independence. General court system includes three levels of courts with original and appellate jurisdiction, whose judgments are subject to the *pouvoir en cassation* (power of annulment) of the Court of Cassation.

Political Parties: Only legal party since 1963 has been PSD. State and PSD administration overlapping at national, regional, and local levels. The major opposition faction has attempted to organize a political party, and several dissident groups reflecting various degrees of pan-Arabism, socialism, and communism operate within Tunisia and from Paris and neighboring Arab countries.

Foreign Relations: Oriented toward the West, despite membership in the Third World nonaligned movement. Stresses cooperation among Maghrib (western Arab world) countries. Emphasis on nationalism over pan-Arabism and rejection of the radical policies of some neighboring Arab states have resulted in Tunisian policies not unlike those of the conservative eastern Arab oil states. Membership in United Nations and most of its specialized agencies, League of Arab States (Arab League), and Organization of African Unity (OAU).

National Security

Armed Forces: In 1978 the armed forces, known collectively as the Tunisian National Army, totaled about 22,200; components were army (18,000), navy (2,500), and air force (1,700). Selective conscription at age twenty for one year of active service and extensive reserve commitment had produced large number of trained reserves. All under control of Ministry of Defense.

Police: Sûreté Nationale (estimated at about 9,000) was urban-oriented national police force, organized for standard police and internal security functions; its Brigade of Public Order was a paramilitary antiriot force. Garde Nationale (estimated at 9,000) provided personnel for 5,000-man paramilitary gendarmerie (rural

police) and 4,000-man border patrol and presidential bodyguard. All police under control of Ministry of the Interior.

Major Tactical Military Units: Army had two combined arms regiments (essentially infantry), one commando regiment of paratroops, one regiment of desert troops, one artillery battalion, and one engineer battalion. Air force has one jet fighter-interceptor squadron and one counterinsurgency squadron; inventory included total of twenty-four combat aircraft, which served also as trainers.

Major Equipment Suppliers: Bulk of armored fighting vehicles, artillery, and small arms provided by France, United States, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. Aircraft obtained from United States, France, Sweden, and Italy. Naval vessels provided by France, United States, Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), United Kingdom, and People's Republic of China.

Military Costs: Defense budget for 1978 totaled TD63.1 million, or 6 percent of total central government budget.

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Figure 1. Republic of Tunisia, 1979

Chapter 1. Historical Setting

Adaptation from a Tunisian painting on glass depicting the mount on which Muhammad rode on his ascent to heaven

TUNISIA HAS A long and distinct history as a politically and culturally unified country, subject over a period of nearly 3,000 years to a variety of rulers and responding to the impulses of contrasting civilizations. The modern state derives its name from Tunis, in origin a Phoenician settlement and since the thirteenth century the country's capital and principal city. But to the Romans and later the Arabs, this relatively small region was known as *Africa,* whose name was extended to the whole of the immense continent that lay beyond.

With Morocco, Algeria, and the northwestern portion of Libya (known historically as Tripolitania), Tunisia forms the Maghrib, the North African region called the "island of the West" (*jazirat al maghrib*)—the land between the "sea of sand" (Sahara) and the Mediterranean Sea—by its Arab conquerors. Tunisia has traditionally stood as a bridge between the Arab west and the Middle East, between Africa and the Islamic world; and, from its strategic location guarding the narrows of the Mediterranean, it has linked them all with Europe.

From the dawn of recorded history the region was inhabited by Berber tribes whose descendants still form the genetic base of the Tunisian people. But it is with particular pride that history-conscious Tunisians point to Carthage and Al Qayrawan as the sources of their continuous development as a people and a nation. Carthage built an empire that dominated North Africa and the western Mediterranean until it fell before the might of Rome. Destroyed by its conquerors and then rebuilt as the administrative center of Roman Africa, the city of Carthage became in time the spiritual center of Latin Christianity in North Africa. Al Qayrawan, founded in the seventh century A.D. by advancing Arab armies, is one of the holy cities of the Muslim world and the wellspring from which Arab culture flowed across North Africa.

Tunisia was part of great medieval Berber empires and, from the sixteenth century, was an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire ruled by dynasties of Turkish beys. Tunisia was occupied by France in 1881 and remained a French protectorate for seventy-five years. The French impact on Tunisia was profound, imposing French institutions, leaving the imprint of French culture and technology, and creating a gallicized elite to whom leadership passed when the protectorate was ended in 1956. Independent Tunisia is regarded not only as socially the most modernized of the Arab countries but the most westernized as well.

The dominant factors of Tunisia's political life are the power and personality of President Habib Bourguiba and the abiding influence at all levels in the society of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD), which is still referred to widely by its historic title, the Neo-Destour (New Constitution)

Party. Born in 1903 at Al Munastir in the Sahil (see Glossary) region, Bourguiba—popularly hailed by his countrymen as the Supreme Combatant—is one of the last surviving of the Afro-Asian nationalist leaders who guided their countries to independence in the post-World War II era. Until 1956 his strength derived from his great popularity as the founder and ideological mentor of the Neo-Destour movement. With independence he used his prestige to institutionalize presidential dominance of the governmental system and to secure for his party an unchallenged supremacy over rival nationalist groups.

Tunisia's population of roughly 6 million is still predominantly rural in composition, but the proportion of urban population is growing rapidly. Tunisians are a cosmopolitan people but are homogeneous in their ethnic background and religion. About 98 percent come from integrated Arab and Berber stock. Roughly the same percent of the population is Muslim. Virtually all Tunisians speak Arabic, although French is used extensively by the educated elite and in government, commerce, and education. All schoolchildren learn French as a second language. There are a few pockets of native Berber speakers. Europeans, mainly Italian and French, are the only significant minority in Tunisia; but their numbers have been declining, from more than 241,000 in 1956 to about 60,000 in 1978. Only a handful of Jews remain. Ethnic distinctions have not been a factor in independent Tunisia's domestic politics.

The fountainhead of traditional social and political values is Islam, the religion brought to Tunisia by the Arabs in the seventh century A.D. The word of God, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and recorded in the Quran, provides Muslims with an integrated structure ordering all personal, social, and political aspects of life. Since independence the traditional social order, particularly as it affected the family and women, has been gradually supplanted by a system based on liberal values. The government has been the leader in effecting this change. Responsibility for personal security and education, formerly accepted by the extended family, has been assumed by the state. With varying degrees of success, religious rituals, family law, and social customs—particularly those affecting the condition of women—and even traditional dress requirements, such as the compulsory wearing of the veil in public by women, have become targets of official pressure and legislation in the name of equality, productivity, and liberal values seen as critical to the development and modernization of Tunisia. Significantly, these actions and development planning as a whole have been undertaken in the name of traditional concepts. For example, two of the fundamental social values preached by Islam—obedience to authority and protection of the helpless—have reappeared in the principles of "guided democracy" and state welfare fostered by the Bourguiba regime. Resistance to modernization has generally been slight, often reflecting regional differ-

ences and level of education rather than deep-seated hostility to change. The 1970s, however, have witnessed a religious revival, particularly evident among young university-trained Tunisians of both genders.

History and natural conditions have combined to divide the coastal regions from the hinterland. The coasts, with fertile soil and adequate rainfall, have been the locus of civilization in Tunisia since the founding of Carthage. The cosmopolitan societies of succeeding dominant cultures have been based in the coastal cities and supported by the agricultural production of the Tell and Sahil plains. The arid and hostile south bears little imprint from this history. Only since independence has a real effort been made to integrate the desert region into the cultural, social, and economic life of the north.

Topographical features include the mountain ranges of the northwest, two fertile coastal plains, and a central steppe region leading to the fringes of the desert in the south. To the north and east, Tunisia has a 1,600-kilometer Mediterranean coastline. All but the northernmost portion of the western land frontier, shared with Algeria, passes through steppe or desert. Libya borders Tunisia across a desert frontier on the southeast (see fig. 1).

Still a predominantly agricultural country, Tunisia has been making progress toward industrialization despite a modest resource base, limited markets, and a shortage of investment capital. This progress is the result of foreign aid, pragmatic planning, and a decrease in resistance to the adoption of modern values.

The economy embraces both a traditional sector dependent on subsistence agriculture and seasonal migratory herding in regions of marginal arability and also a rapidly developing modern sector based on cash-crop farming, minerals, light industry, and urban commerce. The division between the two sectors reflects varied patterns of north-south and urban-rural social and economic development as well as differences in land productivity in the well-watered and accessible coastal regions and in the steppeland of the interior. Foreign trade has played a key role in Tunisia as in many developing countries that export primary goods to purchase equipment for industrial expansion. Fruits, olive oil, mineral products (especially phosphates), and petroleum account for the bulk of Tunisia's exports, and tourism has made an increasingly large contribution to Tunisia's foreign exchange. Food, consumer goods, and industrial machinery are the chief imports. The requirements of the nation's development programs place the balance of payments in constant deficit; but exchange credits, grants, and other forms of capital assistance from abroad offset this.

The government has defined economic goals in a series of long-range development plans, which have been characterized by a pragmatic, liberal outlook since the failure of the socialist-oriented cooperative movement in the 1960s. Tunisia is officially described as having a mixed economy, combining state, cooperative, and

Roman colosseum at Al Jamm (ancient Thysdrus)
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

private sectors; but during the 1970s development plans have emphasized reliance on private enterprise and initiative to meet national goals. Tunisia uses liberal tax incentives to encourage foreign investment in its economic development.

Unemployment and underemployment, forcing tens of thousands of Tunisians to migrate to France and more recently to oil-rich and underpopulated Libya in search of work, have been the government's most serious and constant concern. Creation of jobs has therefore been given priority in government economic planning. The government has also emphasized the role of education in its design for the economic development and modernization of the country. At least 30 percent of the annual national budget is directed toward education, with particular attention to technical training, and approximately 80 percent of the urban population is considered literate.

Tunisia's republican Constitution, promulgated in 1959, provides for regular elections; endorses the separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers; and contains a bill of rights designed to protect individual freedoms. While clearly democratic in its intent, the Constitution has permitted President Bourguiba to exercise broad and unqualified executive powers in the context of a single-party state. Supported by a popular consensus on the need for modernization and by a Tunisian tradition of strong central government, Bourguiba has consolidated his authority over all levels of government administration and has extended his personal influence to most aspects of national life. He long ago adopted a paternalistic attitude toward the nation he rules, keeping political issues before the people and explaining government policy to them through press conferences and speeches.

Internal political opposition is kept in bounds by adroit personnel management. The president shuffles government and party officials frequently to discourage development of factions and intervenes personally to reconcile to the party his appointees who may have opposed it in the past. Bourguiba sees his role as continually molding national solidarity. Popular at home and respected abroad for his achievements, Bourguiba is conscious of his place in his country's history and loses no opportunity to remind his countrymen of their debt to him. "There is not a Tunisian," he stated in 1973, "who does not owe his being a free citizen in an independent and sovereign country to me."

The PSD is a mass party active at all levels of society. Its chief functions are to rally public opinion behind government policies and to channel local reactions upward to the national leadership. The goal of the party has been to ensure national unity. In political terms this has meant confining free political competition within the framework of a single party, where the habit of discipline among a large and stable majority could counterpose opposition minorities while providing them with a channel for the expression of their views. Formally the party, like the government, is demo-

cratic and representative; but in practice it too is subject to executive guidance transcending statutes. From its educated elite, the loyal party membership has learned to accept this seeming contradiction as an example of pragmatic flexibility.

Despite unrest, which grew more evident in the late 1970s, the political process has functioned since independence with considerable harmony. Bourguiba's Tunisia has been able to carry out major social reforms while maintaining political stability, a rare accomplishment among developing nations. Some foreign observers regard Tunisia as a model among emerging nations for guiding its people toward a modern society. Critics of the regime in the late 1970s, however, characterized Tunisia as existing in a political twilight zone while awaiting the end of the Bourguiba era.

Tunisian foreign policy has tended to be inward looking, focused upon the immediate needs of the society rather than upon the country's role in international affairs. Bourguiba has attempted to keep Tunisia isolated from political currents such as pan-Africanism or pan-Arabism as well as from alignment or identification with a global bloc. Accordingly, Tunisia seeks to maintain cordial relations with all countries and to incur no political commitments when accepting economic assistance from abroad.

Early History

The coastal regions of Tunisia shared in an early neolithic culture that was common to the whole Mediterranean littoral. Artifacts left by hunters and fishermen who excelled at making stone blades and tools are plentiful, and evidence points to the early domestication of cattle and cultivation of crops in the area. South of the Atlas range, nomadic hunters and herders roamed a vast savannah, well watered and abounding in game, that 8,000 years ago stretched across what is now the Sahara Desert. Their culture flourished until the region began to desiccate after 2000 B.C. Scattering before the encroaching desert and invading horsemen, some of the savannah people migrated northward where they were subsequently absorbed by the Berbers.

The origin of the Berbers is a mystery, the investigation of which has produced an abundance of educated speculation but no definitive solution. Archaeological and linguistic evidence suggests southwestern Asia as the point from which the ancestors of the Berbers began their migration into North Africa early in the third millennium B.C. Over succeeding centuries they extended their range from Siwa in Egypt to the Niger Basin. Classified as Caucasians of predominantly Mediterranean stock, the Berbers are a composite people of anthropologically varied sources, presenting a broad range of physical types and speaking dialects related to the Hamitic language group. The affinity of various Berber groups seems based almost entirely on linguistic grounds, and language is the only criterion by which to distinguish them. Berber tradition told that they were descended from two unrelated families; and indeed scholars believe that the Berbers

crossed North Africa in two simultaneous waves, one from the southeast that entered the region after a long sojourn in black Africa, the other from the northeast. The Berbers were well known to classical writers. Sallust, a Roman historian and politician living in the first century B.C., described their way of life then, which in many particulars was still valid in the early twentieth century.

Carthage

Minoan seamen from Crete may have set up depots on the coast of present-day Tunisia before 2000 B.C., but it was only with the arrival of Phoenician traders, who penetrated the western Mediterranean before the twelfth century B.C., that the region entered into recorded history. Safe harbors on the African coast, equipped to service, supply, and shelter their ships, were the links in a maritime chain that reached to Spain. Tunis, Bizerte, Susah, Al Munastir, and Safaqis all had their origin as Punic trading posts, where the merchants of Tyre (in present-day Lebanon) developed commercial relations with the Berber tribes of the interior and paid them tribute to ensure their cooperation in the exploitation of raw materials. The greatest of the Punic colonies, Carthage (Qart Hadasht, the New Town), was founded, according to tradition, in 814 B.C. by a Phoenician princess whose name has come down to Western readers through Vergil's *Aeneid* as Dido.

Carthage was governed by a mercantile oligarchy that exercised power through a senate, composed of elder statesmen, under a constitution praised by Aristotle for providing a perfect blend of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Joint executive authority was vested in two *suffetes* (consuls), chosen annually by an electorate that was also called upon to decide on difficult questions by referendum. The coastal countryside was closely settled with self-governing towns, dependent on Carthage for foreign affairs and defense.

Carthaginian seamen developed a thriving trade in the Mediterranean as they contested control of the sea-lanes with the Greeks from Italy and Sicily. Settlers on the Atlantic coast bartered merchandise for gold from the western Sudan (see Glossary), in the quest of which the Carthaginian admiral Hanno made his fabled voyage to the mouth of the Senegal River. Successful merchants, seamen, and craftsmen, the Carthaginians turned to agriculture as well, raising grain and introducing the cultivation of olives in the region on estates that employed Berber workers.

Beyond the Punic enclaves and plantations the Berber tribes prevailed, but the influence of Punic civilization among them was deep seated. The Berbers displayed a remarkable gift for cultural assimilation, readily synthesizing Punic religious cults with the nature worship, magic, and holy places of folk religion and adopting the Phoenicians' Semitic language, which was still spoken by Berber farmers in the coastal countryside in the late Roman period.

Figure 2. Carthaginian Hegemony, Fourth and Third Centuries B.C.

When the mother-city, Tyre, fell under Persian domination, the western Phoenician colonies looked for leadership to Carthage, which by the fifth century B.C. had extended its hegemony along the coast of North Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to Cyrenaica as well as to Sardinia and western Sicily (see fig. 2). Carthage and its dependencies formed defensive alliances with the Berber tribes in the hinterland from whom they regularly extracted payments of tribute. Essentialy a maritime power, Carthage hired Berber mercenaries for its overseas military expeditions and imported mercenaries from abroad to man African garrisons. Carthage contended for generations against Syracuse and the other Greek city-states in Sicily and, as an ally of the Etruscans, resisted the expansion of their Greek commercial rivals in Corsica and Italy.

The growth of Carthaginian influence in Italy and commercial dominance in the western Mediterranean drew the Punic city-state into a confrontation with the emerging power of Rome in the third century B.C. Defeated in the first Punic war (264–241 B.C.), Carthage was forced to surrender its colonies in Sicily and Sardinia, but under the leadership of the Barcids—Hamilcar, Hasdrubal, and Hannibal—it rapidly built a new and larger empire in Spain to compensate for its losses. Claiming Roman interference in Carthaginian colonial affairs, Hannibal led an army of 40,000—many of them Berbers—out of Spain, crossing the Alps into Italy with a baggage train of elephants in 218 B.C. to exact revenge against Rome for previous humiliations. Hannibal remained in Italy for sixteen years, defeating every army that the Romans threw against him, but his goal—the capture of Rome itself—

eluded him. In the meantime Roman forces occupied Spain, cutting him off from reinforcements, and ultimately compelled Hannibal to abandon Italy by bringing the war to Africa. In 202 B.C. the Romans, under Scipio Africanus, defeated Hannibal at Zama (present-day Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf) and dictated a harsh peace to Carthage, bringing an end to its days as a major power.

Berber Kingdoms

The basic unit of social and political organization among the Berbers was the extended family, usually identified with a particular village or with traditional grazing grounds. Families in turn were bound together in the clan. An alliance of clans, often tracing their origins to a common ancestor as a symbol of unity, formed a tribe. Courts and representative assemblies guided by customs peculiar to the group functioned at each level of organization. Berber folk law and government, like Berber folk religion, was highly personalized and therefore most effective at the lowest levels of its application. Ultimately each household or tent was its own republic.

For mutual defense, kindred tribes joined in confederations which, as war was a permanent feature of tribal life, were in time institutionalized. Some chieftains, successful in battle, established rudimentary territorial states by imposing their rule on defeated tribes and allies alike; but their kingdoms were easily fragmented, and the dynasties that they sought to found rarely survived more than a generation. By the third century B.C., however, several large although loosely administered Berber kingdoms had emerged behind the coastal areas controlled by Carthage, the monarchy supported by the sedentary farmers who looked to the kings to protect them from the raids of the nomadic pastoralists. The Berber kings adapted Punic and Greek ceremonial forms to the usage of their courts, and treaties of friendship with Carthage were often sealed by a king's marriage to a woman from the family of a Carthaginian notable. The Berber kings ruled in the shadow of Carthage and later Rome, sometimes as satellites, forming alliances with one or another of the great powers. After Carthage was vanquished by Rome, they threw in their lots with factions vying for power in the Roman civil wars of the first century B.C.

One of the most illustrious of these tribal monarchs was Masinissa (ca. 240–148 B.C.), who had served with the Carthaginians in Spain. Masinissa shifted his support to Rome in time to be counted among the victor's allies when Carthage surrendered in 202 B.C. With Roman patronage he united Numidia and extended his authority from the Moulouya River to Cyrenaica, a territory he governed from his Hellenistic court at Cirta (Constantine in present-day Algeria). Numidia was divided among several heirs after Masinissa's death. Rome intervened when his grandson, Jugurtha (reigned 118–105 B.C.), attempted to revive Masinissa's Berber kingdom. Betrayed by a rival chieftain at the end of a long

and exasperating war in which he pinned down large numbers of Roman troops, Jugurtha was carried away to Rome and starved to death in the Capitol.

Roman Africa

Rome dictated a hard peace to Carthage after the battle of Zama, imposing a stiff indemnity and prohibiting Carthage from making war without Roman consent. When Carthage succeeded in paying the indemnity levied against it, voices were raised in the Roman Senate warning against a revival of Carthaginian might and urging that Carthage be destroyed. Masinissa had in the meantime taken advantage of the restrictions placed on Carthage's war-making powers to invade its territory. When Carthage chose to defend itself, Rome declared war, charging a breach of the peace agreement. Carthage surrendered to a besieging Roman army in 146 B.C. Its population was dispersed, the city razed to the ground, and its earth sown with salt. Carthaginian territory was annexed by Rome and eventually organized as the province of Proconsular Africa, governed by a civilian official (proconsul) appointed annually by the Senate. Julius Caesar subsequently ordered the rebuilding of Carthage as a Roman city and the capital of the province. The royal house of Masinissa continued to rule Numidia as a Roman protectorate until 46 B.C. when Caesar deposed its king, who had sided with Pompey in the civil wars, and attached a part of it to Proconsular Africa (see fig. 3). For 400 years the province was peaceful and prosperous, part of a cosmopolitan world state whose citizens shared a common language, legal system, and Roman identity.

The Roman ruins seen in present-day Tunisia attest abundantly to the civic vitality of Proconsular Africa, where populous cities and even the smaller towns, their streets laid out in characteristic grid design, enjoyed the amenities of urban life—the forum, markets, public entertainments, baths, and fountains—found in every corner of the Roman Empire. Merchants and craftsmen from many parts of the Roman world established themselves in the cities and towns, while army veterans and migrants from Italy settled in the coastal countryside; but the bulk of the population of Proconsular Africa consisted of punicized Berber farmers. Called the "granary of the empire," Roman Africa was valued for its agricultural exports, which were Italy's principal source of food. Slave labor was common, but on the vast imperial domains and estates acquired by Roman aristocrats land was leased to tenants who paid taxes and rent with grain that went to feed the army and provide free bread for the dole in Rome.

Roman Africa also had a substantial Jewish population. Many Jews were deported there after the rebellions against Roman rule in Palestine in the first and second centuries A.D., but others had come with earlier Punic settlers. Judaism made many converts among the Berbers, and in some cases whole tribes were identified as Jewish.

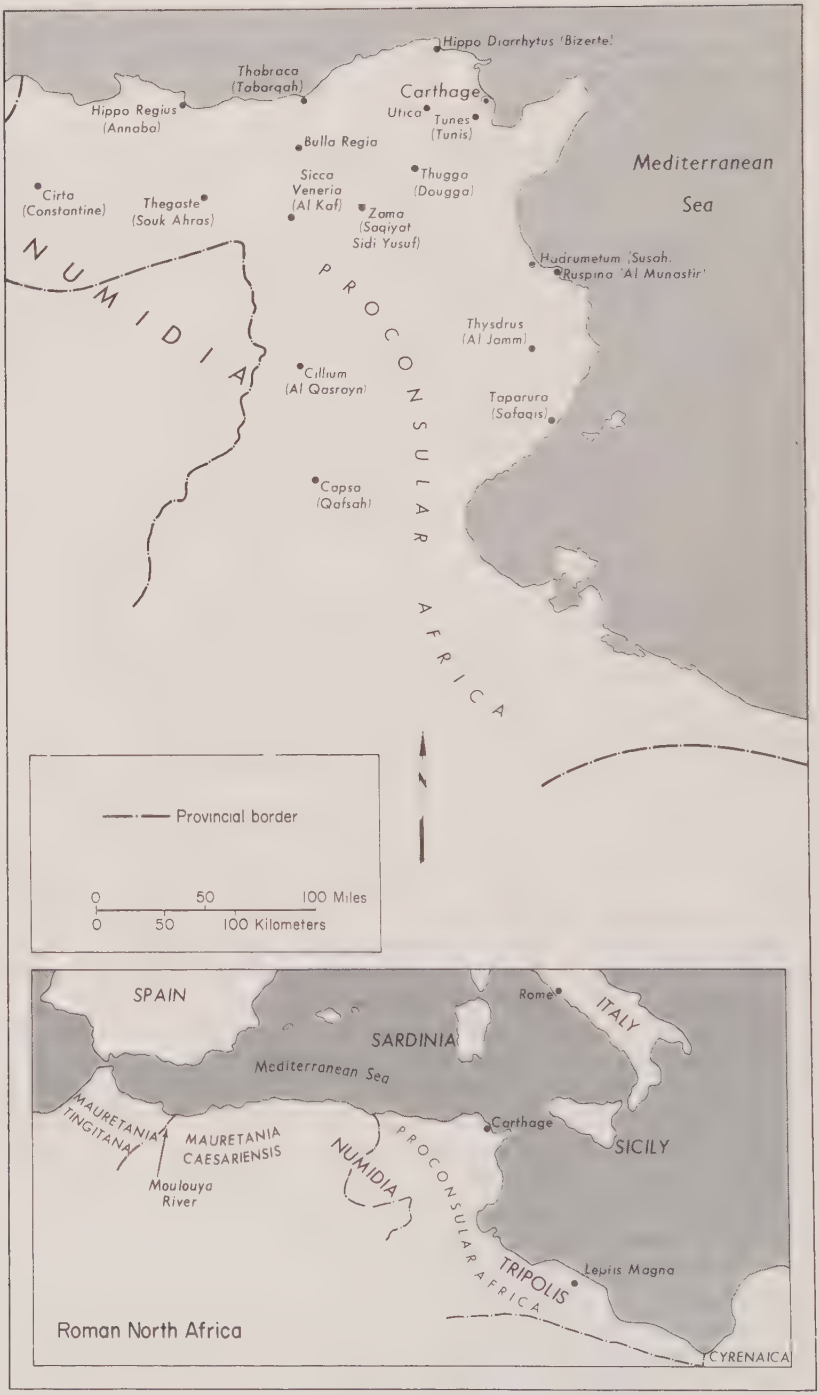


Figure 3. Proconsular Africa, Second Century A.D.

By the beginning of the second century Christianity had been introduced among the Jewish community, and it soon gained converts in the towns and among slaves. Carthage became the center of Latin Christianity in Africa; Tertullian, a convert born there in about 150, was the first and one of the most important of early Christian theologians writing in Latin. By the end of the fourth century Rome's African provinces had been thoroughly Christianized, and inroads had been made in the hinterland among the Berber tribes. The tribes sometimes converted en masse, but schismatic and heretical movements also developed, often as forms of political protest. Donatism, a heresy within the puritanical tradition, won adherents during periods of severe Roman persecution and flourished again in opposition to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, accused by them of collaborating with the state, after Christianity was officially recognized in the fourth century by the empire. The sect became a vehicle for social revolt at a time of political deterioration and economic depression. Christianity in North Africa had assimilated many elements of the traditional Berber folk religion, and Donatism had been described as an example of the religious enthusiasm to be seen again in the history of the Berbers.

It was against the threat of Donatism to the African church that Saint Augustine (354–430), bishop of Hippo Regius (Annaba in present-day Algeria), directed many of the sermons and books, including his autobiographical *Confessions,* whose influence on Christian thought has continued undiminished through the centuries. Born in Thegaste (Souk Ahras in present-day Algeria), Saint Augustine is recognized as one of the Latin Fathers of the Church. In *The City of God,* he sought to demonstrate that the future of the church was not dependent on the survival of the Roman state (or, by extension, on any secular authority), as many contemporary Christians feared it was, and thereby to prepare his people for the onslaught of the Vandals.

Invited to North Africa by a rebellious Roman official, the Vandals, a Germanic tribe, crossed from Spain in 429, seized power, and under their war leader, Gaiseric, established a kingdom that made its capital at Carthage. Although the Roman Empire eventually recognized their overlordship in much of North Africa, the Vandals confined their rule to the most economically profitable areas in Proconsular Africa. There they constituted an isolated warrior caste, concerned with collecting taxes and exploiting the land. Civil administration was left in Roman hands, but the Vandals, as Arian Christians, vigorously attempted to destroy Roman Catholic ecclesiastical influence. From their African base they conquered Sardinia and Corsica and launched raids on Italy, sacking the city of Rome in 455. In time, however, the Vandals lost much of their warlike spirit, and their kingdom fell to the armies of Belisarius, the Byzantine general who in 533 began the reconquest of North Africa for the Roman Empire.

Effective Byzantine control in the old Roman province was restricted to the north and the coast, and even there the newly walled towns, strongholds, fortified farms, and watchtowers called attention to its tenuous nature. The region's prosperity had shrunk under Vandal domination. Unpopular Byzantine governors imposed burdensome taxation, but towns and public services—including the water system—were left in decay. The old Roman political and social order, disrupted by the Vandals, could not be restored, but Byzantine rule in Africa did prolong the Roman ideal of imperial unity there for another century and a half and prevented the ascendancy of the Berber nomads in the coastal region. In outlying areas neglected by the Vandals the inhabitants had sought the protection of tribal chieftains and, having grown accustomed to their autonomy, resisted reassimilation into the imperial system, but no coherent form of political organization evolved there to take the place of Roman authority.

Islam and the Arabs

By the time of his death in A.D. 632 the Prophet Muhammad and his followers had brought most of the tribes and towns of the Arabian Peninsula under the banner of the new monotheistic religion of Islam (literally, submission), which was conceived of as uniting the individual believer, the state, and the society under the omnipotent will of God. Islamic rulers therefore exercised both temporal and religious authority. Adherents of Islam, called Muslims ("those who submit" to the will of God), collectively formed the House of Islam (Dar al Islam). All others were infidels who lay outside awaiting the opportunity to be converted.

Within a generation Arab armies had carried Islam north and east from Arabia in the wake of their rapid conquests and westward across North Africa as far as Tripoli. There stiff Berber resistance slowed the Arab advance, and efforts at permanent conquest were resumed only when it became apparent that the Maghrib could be opened up as a theater of operations in the Muslim campaign against the Byzantine Empire. In 670 the Arabs surged into the Roman province of Africa (transliterated as Ifriquiya in Arabic), where their commander, Uqba ben Nafi, founded the city of Al Qayrawan as a military base about 150 kilometers south of Byzantine-held Carthage. The selection of this encampment in the midst of a plain, separated on the one hand from the Roman cities on the coast and on the other hand from the mountains in Numidia, where the Berber tribes continued their stubborn resistance, was a deliberate act of policy by Uqba, who reportedly announced that he was founding a city that would serve "as a strong point for Islam until the end of time." The name chosen for the new Arab capital, Al Qayrawan, derived from the Persian word *karwan* (caravan), also suggests that Uqba was aware of the commercial possibilities of the site located at a crossroads of the trade routes.

Carthage fell in 693, but the last pockets of Byzantine resistance on the North African coast were wiped out only after the Arabs had

obtained naval supremacy in the Mediterranean. The Arabs cautiously probed the western Maghrib, and in 710 the governor of Ifriquiya, Musa ibn Nusair, invaded Morocco and carried their conquests to the Atlantic. In 712 they mounted an invasion of Spain and in three years had subdued all but the mountainous regions in the extreme north. Muslim Spain, called Andalusia, and the Maghrib, which had been conquered within fifty years of the founding of Al Qayrawan, were organized under the political and religious leadership of the Umayyad caliph of Damascus.

Arab rule in Ifriquiya—as elsewhere in the Islamic world in the eighth century—had as its ideal the establishment of political and religious unity under a caliphate (the office of the Prophet's successor as supreme earthly leader of Islam) governed in accord with a legal system (sharia) administered by *cudah* (religious judges; sing., *cadi*) to which all other considerations, including tribal loyalties, were subordinated. The sharia was based primarily on the Quran and the Hadith (the extra-Quranic sayings of the Prophet) and derived in part from Arab tribal and market law.

Arab rule was easily imposed on the towns, which prospered again under Arabic patronage, and in the coastal farming areas. People in the former valued the security that permitted them to practice their commerce and trade in peace, while the punicized farmers recognized an affinity with the Semitic Arabs to whom they looked to protect their lands against the nomadic Berber tribesmen. While the Arabs abhorred the tribal Berbers as barbarians, the Berbers often saw the Arabs only as an arrogant and brutal soldiery bent on collecting taxes. Communal and representative Berber institutions also contrasted sharply and frequently clashed with the personal and authoritarian government that the Arabs had adopted under Byzantine influence.

The Arabs formed an urban elite in Ifriquiya, where they had come originally as conquerors and missionaries, not as colonists. Their armies had traveled without women and married among the indigenous population, transmitting Arab culture and Islamic religion over an extended period of time to the townsmen and farmers; but conversion to Islam was more rapid among the nomadic tribes of the hinterland that stoutly resisted Arab political domination. Many Berber converts were opportunists, however, and tribes that accepted Islam under Arab pressure often abandoned it once the intimidating Arab tax collectors and slave traders had moved on. Some tribes had records of repeated apostasy and reconversion. Once established as Muslims, however, the Berbers, with their characteristic love of independence and impassioned religious temperament, shaped Islam in their own image. They embraced schismatic Muslim sects—often traditional folk religion barely disguised as Islam—as a way of breaking from Arab control with the same enthusiasm that their Christian forebears had accepted Donatism in opposition to Rome.

The heretical Kharidjite movement surfaced in Morocco as a revolt against the Arabs in 739. The Berber Kharidjites (seceders; literally, those who emerge from impropriety) proclaimed their belief that any suitable Muslim candidate could be elected caliph without regard to his race, station, or descent from the Prophet. Taking a position directly paralleling that of the Berber Christian Donatists, the Kharidjites maintained that a sinner could no longer be a believer because faith was not possible without purity, and they thereby regarded all other Muslims as heretics. The attack on the Arab monopoly of the religious leadership of Islam was explicit in Kharidjite doctrine, and Berbers across the Maghrib rose in revolt in the name of religion against Arab domination. Al Qayrawan was sacked and its mosques desecrated. In the wake of the revolt, Kharidjite sectarians established a number of theocratic tribal kingdoms, most of which had short and troubled histories. The rise of the Kharidjites in the Maghrib coincided with a period of turmoil in the Arab world during which the Abbasid dynasty overthrew the Umayyads and relocated the caliphate in Baghdad.

In the countryside the ulama (Islamic scholars and teachers; sing., *alim*) of the mosques were replaced as the spiritual guides of the people by wandering holy men (*al murabutim,* or "those who have made a religious retreat," transliterated as marabouts). The marabouts were mystics and seers, miracle workers endowed with a charisma (*baraka*), whose tradition antedated Islam in the Maghrib and was as old as religion itself among the Berbers. Called "men of the soil" (*ryal al bilad*), the marabouts of popular Islam were incorporated into intensely local cults of saints whose domed tombs dotted the countryside and who were venerated by Muslims and Berber Jews alike. The marabouts had traditionally acted as arbiters in tribal disputes, and whenever the authority of government waned in a particular locale, the people turned to them for political leadership as well as for spiritual guidance. Maghribi Islam thus took shape as a coexisting blend of the scrupulous intellectualism of the ulama and the sometimes frenzied emotionalism of the masses. In general, however, Ifriquiya was not as susceptible to the heterodoxy that characterized popular Islamic practices farther west. Two factors account for this: first, Ifriquiya came more directly under the orthodox influence of the mosques and schools of Tunis and Al Qayrawan; and, second, its larger urban and sedentary population had been more thoroughly arabized than was the case elsewhere in the Maghrib.

Aghlabids

After the conquest Ifriquiya was governed by a succession of emirs (commanders) who were subordinate to the caliph in Damascus and, after 750, in Baghdad. In 800 the caliph appointed as emir Ibrahim ibn Aghlab, who established a hereditary dynasty and ruled Ifriquiya as an autonomous state that was subject to the caliph's spiritual jurisdiction and nominally recognized him as its

political suzerain. The ninth century has been described as the region's "golden age"; from this time it developed as a politically and culturally distinct entity within the Islamic world.

In 827 the reigning emir, Ziyat Allah, diverted the energies of the restless Arab military caste to Sicily, where rebellious subjects of the Byzantine emperor had invited Aghlabid intervention. The Arabs seized part of the island and conquered the rest piecemeal over the next seventy-five years. For a time they held Sardinia and a foothold in southern Italy as well, and in 846 Arab raiders plundered the suburbs of Rome and sacked the basilica of Saint Peter. The Aghlabids contested control of the central Mediterranean with the Byzantine Empire and played an active role in the internal politics of Italy (see fig. 4). Palermo, noted for its wealth and cosmopolitan culture as capital of Aghlabid Sicily, was one of Europe's largest cities.

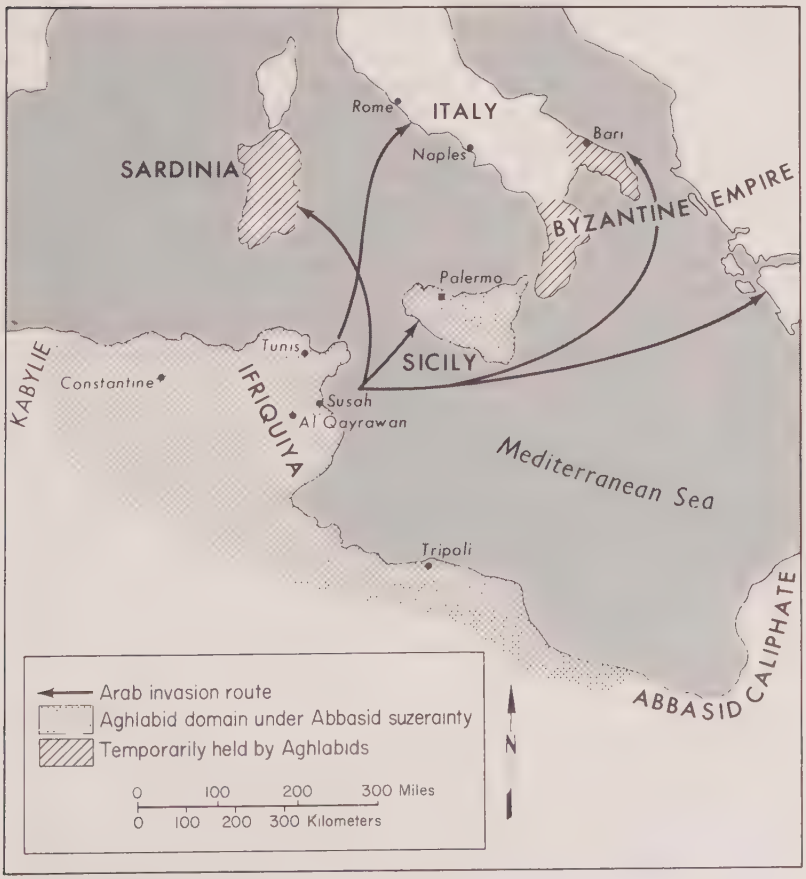


Figure 4. Aghlabid Domains, Ninth Century A.D.

Meanwhile in Ifriquiya, the Aghlabid emirs repaired the neglected Roman irrigation system, rebuilding the country's prosperity and restoring the vitality of its cities and towns with the agricultural surplus that was produced. At the top of Ifriquiya's political and social hierarchy were the court, the military caste, and an Arab urban elite that included merchants, scholars, and government officials who had come to Al Qayrawan and Tunis from many parts of the Islamic world. Members of the large Jewish communities that also resided in those cities held office under the emirs and engaged in commerce and the crafts. Converts to Islam often retained the positions of authority held traditionally by their families or class in Roman Africa; but a Christian community, speaking the provincial Latin dialect of Africa, lingered on in the towns until the twelfth century.

During the golden age Aghlabid patronage transformed Al Qayrawan into the center of Maghribi religious and intellectual life. Al Qayrawan was a great market for books in Arabic and Hebrew copied by its scribes. Its mosques and schools attracted pilgrims and scholars—Jewish as well as Muslim—from all parts of the Islamic world. So important was the reputation of Al Qayrawan as a holy city that, according to custom, seven pilgrimages made there by a devout Muslim were the equivalent in merit of the required hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca. The most outstanding cultural figure of the golden age was the poet-scholar Ibn Rachiq, renowned for his literary commentaries and historical works. His contemporary at Al Qayrawan, Ibn Zeid, codified the Malikite branch of Islamic law, and more than forty volumes on jurisprudence are attributed to him.

The Aghlabids established a tradition of intellectual excellence that survived the dynasty. In the tenth century Constantius Africanus, a Christian from Carthage knowledgeable in medicine, natural science, and astronomy, introduced Arab learning in those fields to Europe from the Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino in Italy, where he translated works of Arabic scholarship into Latin. It was in the largest part through Arabic texts that classical Greek learning in science and philosophy was transmitted to the schoolmen of Europe over the next two centuries. The tension and interplay between the Islamic and Christian worlds—most evident on the frontiers in Sicily and Spain where the two cultures were in constant conflict—was a major stimulus for Europe's twelfth-century renaissance.

Fatimids

Already in the seventh century a conflict had developed between supporters of rival claimants to the caliphate that would split Islam into two branches—the orthodox Sunni and the Shia—which continued thereafter as the basic division among Muslims. The Shia (from the so-called Shiat Ali, or Party of Ali) supported the claim of the direct descendants of Ali, the fourth caliph and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, whereas the Sunni favored

that of Ali's rival, Muawiya, leader of a collateral branch of Muhammad's tribe, the Quraysh of Mecca, and the principle of election of the fittest from the ranks of the *shurfa* (descendants of the Prophet—literally, nobles; sing. sharif). The Shia had their greatest appeal among non-Arab Muslims, who were scorned like the Berbers by the aristocratic desert Arabs.

In the closing decade of the ninth century a missionary of the Ismaili sect of Shia Islam, Abu Abdullah al Hussein, converted the Kutama Berbers of the Kabylie region to that militant brand of Shiism and led them on a crusade against the Sunni Aghlabids. Al Qayrawan fell in 909, and the next year the Kutama installed the Ismaili grandmaster from Syria, Ubaidalla Said, as imam (religious leader) of their movement and ruler over the territory they had conquered. Recognized by his Berber followers as the Mahdi (the divinely guided one), the imam founded the Shia dynasty of the Fatimids, named for Fatima, daughter of Muhammad and wife of Ali, from whom he claimed descent, and moved the capital from Al Qayrawan to a coastal stronghold renamed Al Mahdiyah in his honor.

Merchants of the coastal towns were the backbone of the Fatimid state that had been founded by religious enthusiasts and imposed by Berber tribesmen. The slow but steady economic revival of Europe created a demand for goods from the East for which the ports of Ifriquiya and Fatimid Sicily were the ideal distribution centers. Trading houses in Ifriquiya opened branches in Egypt; and their merchants, some of whom ventured as far as India in search of trade goods, won a reputation for their adventuresomeness. The warehouses in the ports of Ifriquiya stored and shipped out grain, drugs, spices, lacquer, and dyes, as well as *susiyyat,* the cloth woven in Ifriquiya from Egyptian flax for export back to Egypt.

Fatimid rule was harsh and intolerant, persecuting alike the Sunni ulama of Al Qayrawan and the Kharidjite sectarians. For many years the Fatimids threatened Morocco with invasion, but eventually they turned their armies eastward, where in the name of religion the Berbers took their revenge on the Arabs. The Fatimids had completed the conquest of Egypt from the Abbasids by 969 and moved their capital to the new city that they founded at Cairo, where they established a Shia caliphate to rival that of the Sunni caliph at Baghdad.

The Fatimids left the Maghrib to their Berber vassals, the Zirids, but the Shiite regime had already begun to crumble outside Ifriquiya, as factions struggled indecisively for regional supremacy. The Zirids neglected the country's economy, except to pillage it for their personal gain. Agricultural production declined, and farmers and herdsmen took to brigandage. The drying up of the gold supply and shifting of trade routes gradually depressed Ifriquiya's once thriving commerce. In an effort to hold the support of the urban Arabs, the Zirid emir, Al Moezz ibn Badis,

defiantly rejected the Shia creed in 1049, broke with the Fatimids, and initiated a Berber return to Sunni orthodoxy.

In Cairo the Fatimid caliph invited beduin tribes from Arabia, known collectively as the Hilalians, who for years had ravaged Egypt, to migrate to the Maghrib and punish his rebellious vassals. The slow but continuous advance of the Arab nomads spread across the region, in the words of the historian Ibn Khaldun, like a "swarm of locusts," impoverishing it, destroying towns, and turning farmland into steppes. In 1057 they looted and destroyed Al Qayrawan. Over a long period of time they displaced Berber farmers from their land and converted it to pasturage. Many Berbers, driven from their traditional lands, joined the Hilalians as nomads. The Hilalian impact on the Maghrib was devastating in both economic and demographic terms, altering the face and culture of the region and completing the arabization of Ifriquiya.

In the meantime the Norman rulers of southern Italy took advantage of the Zirids' distress in North Africa to invade Sicily in 1060 and bring it back under Christian control. In 1134 hearty Norman knights occupied the island of Jarbah to use it as a base for attacks on the African mainland; and by 1150 Roger II, Norman king of Sicily, held a string of ports and fortresses along the coast between Tunis and Tripoli and dominated the narrow straits of the central Mediterranean. Norman interests in North Africa, however, were essentially commercial rather than political, and no effort was made to extend their conquests inland.

Hafsids

The eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed the rise in Morocco of two rival Berber tribal dynasties, the Almoravids and the Almohads, both founded by religious reformers, that dominated the Maghrib and Muslim Spain for more than 200 years. The founder of the Almohad (literally, "one who proclaims" the oneness of God) movement was a Sunni *alim*, Mohamed ibn Tumart (d. 1130), who preached a doctrine of moral regeneration through the reaffirmation of monotheism. As judge and political leader as well as spiritual director, ibn Tumart gave the Almohads a hierarchical and theocratic centralized government, respecting but transcending the old representative tribal structure. His successor, the sultan Abdel Mumin (reigned 1130–63), subdued Morocco, extended the Muslim frontier in Spain, and by 1160 had swept eastward across the Maghrib and forced the withdrawal of the Normans—with safe passage—from their strongholds in Ifriquiya, which he added to the Almohad empire.

Mumin proclaimed an Almohad caliphate at Cordova, giving the sultan supreme religious as well as political authority within his domains, but theology gradually gave way to dynastic politics as the motivating force behind the movement. The Almohads had succeeded in unifying the Maghrib; but as its empire grew and the Almohad power base shifted to Spain, the dynasty became more

remote from the Berber tribes that had launched it. By 1270 the Almohads in Morocco had succumbed to tribal warfare and in Spain to the steady advance of Castile.

At the eastern end of the Almohad empire the sultan left an autonomous viceroy whose office became hereditary in the line of Mohamed ben Abu Hafs (reigned 1207–21), a descendant of one of ibn Tumart's companions. With the demise of the Almohad dynasty in Morocco, the Hafsids adopted the titles of caliph and sultan and considered themselves the Almohad's legitimate successors, keeping alive the memory of ibn Tumart and the ideal of Maghribi unity. Their dynasty survived in Tunisia—as Ifriquiya came to be known—until the sixteenth century.

The poet-prince Abu Zakariya al Hafs (reigned 1228–49) moved his capital from Al Qayrawan, which had never recovered from its sacking by the Hilalians, to Tunis, which then became the cultural as well as the political capital of the country. The Hafsids' political support and Tunisia's economy were rooted in the coastal towns, while the hinterland was effectively given up to the tribes that had made their nominal submission to Tunis. The Hafsid sultans encouraged trade with Europe and forged close links with Aragon and the Italian maritime states, dispatching embassies as far afield as the court of King Haakon of Norway.

The Maghrib and Spain, linked under the Almohads, shared a common culture—called Moorish—that transcended dynastic lines and political boundaries in creating new and unique forms of art, literature, and architecture. Its influence spread eastward from Spain as far as Tunisia where the return of order and prosperity made possible a second flowering of Arab culture and scholarship. Under the Hafsids the school of the Zitouna mosque in Tunis was recognized as the leading center of Islamic learning in the Maghrib, but Hafsid Tunisia's culture was essentially a phenomenon of the court, dependent on the patronage of its sultans. Indisputably the greatest figure of the Hafsid age was Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406), the historian and critic, who attempted to formulate historical laws to explain the rise and fall of dynasties in the Islamic world in his encyclopedic *Al Muqaddima* (*Prolegomena*, or "Introduction" to universal history), a work that remains an important source for early Maghribi history.

Despite commercial and diplomatic ties, Hafsid relations with the European powers eventually deteriorated. In 1270 Louis IX of France (Saint Louis) led the Eighth Crusade to Tunisia, where he died of the plague. The Aragonese intrigued in the dynasty's increasingly troubled and complex internal politics, backing rival claimants to the Hafsid throne. Marabout republics, tribal states, and the coastal enclaves seized by Andalusian and renegade Greek pirates defied the sultan's authority and by the fifteenth century had supplanted it in large parts of Tunisia. The Hafsids periodically attempted to revive the dynasty's fortunes, only to exhaust their resources in the effort; but during the Hafsid era, spanning

more than 300 years, Tunisia acquired a distinctive character and defined its place within the Islamic world.

Ottoman Regency

Piracy lured adventurers from around the Mediterranean to the Maghribi coastal cities and islands. Among them were two brothers, Aruj and Khair al Din, known as the Barbarossa (Redbeard) brothers to Europeans who feared and respected them. Muslims from the Greek island of Lesbos, they reached Tunisia in 1504 and sailed out of Jarbah under Hafsid patronage. In 1510, however, the Barbarossa brothers were invited by the maritime republic of Algiers to defend it against the Spaniards. Instead they seized Algiers, using it as a base of operations not only for piracy but for conquests in the interior as well. Khair al Din subsequently recognized the suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan over the territory that he controlled and was in turn appointed the sultan's regent in the Maghrib, bearing the title beylerbey (commander in chief). He was forced to abandon Algiers temporarily (1519–25) to the Hafsids, who resisted Ottoman penetration in the Maghrib, but with Turkish troops Khair al Din was able to consolidate his position in the central Maghrib and in 1534 mounted a successful seaborne assault on Tunis.

The Hafsid sultan, Hassan, took refuge in Spain where he sought the aid of the Habsburg king-emperor, Charles V, to restore him to his throne. Spanish troops and ships recaptured Tunis in 1535 and reinstalled Hassan. Protected by a large Spanish garrison at La Goulette, the harbor of Tunis, the Hafsids became the Muslim ally of Catholic Spain in its struggle with the Turk for supremacy in the Mediterranean, making Tunisia and the waters around it the stage for repeated conflict between the two powers.

In 1569 a Turkish force operating out of Algiers retook Tunis, only to lose it again in 1573 to Don Juan of Austria. The next year, however, the Turks returned with a large armada and 40,000 troops, compelling the Spanish garrison to abandon Tunisia. The last of the Hafsids was carried off to Constantinople, and Tunisia became a province of the Ottoman Empire, governed by the beylerbey in Algiers, with Turkish as the language of administration.

Pashas, Deys, and Beys

In 1587 the Ottoman Maghrib was divided into three regencies, at Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. In Tunisia the authority of the beylerbey as regent gave way to that of a pasha (governor) appointed by the sultan for a one-year term. The regency was provided with a corps of janissaries, recruited from Anatolian peasants who were commited to a lifetime of service in Tunisia. The corps numbered 4,000 infantrymen and was organized into forty companies, each commanded by a junior officer with the rank of dey (literally, maternal uncle). It formed a self-governing military guild, subject to its own laws, whose interests were protected by the Divan, a council of senior officers. The pasha's role was reduced to that of ceremonial head of state and figurehead repre-

sentative of Ottoman suzerainty, as real power came to rest with the army.

While the mission of the janissaries in Tunisia was to maintain order and collect taxes, the Barbary corsairs supplied the regency's treasury with a steady income from piracy and waged war at sea against Spain. Piracy was a highly disciplined business, calculated as an extension of overall Turkish naval strategy in the Mediterranean. Operations were conducted by the *raïs* (pirate captains), who preyed on shipping and raided the European coasts of the western Mediterranean to capture and carry away hostages to be held for ransom or as merchandise for the slave markets of North Africa. The *raïs*—many of them European renegades who had apostacized and become "Turks by profession"—were banded together in a self-regulating *taifa* (guild) to further the corporate interests of their trade and to counter the influence of the Turkish military garrison in the affairs of the regency.

Mutinies and coups were frequent, and generally the janissaries were loyal to whomever paid and fed them most regularly. In 1591 the deys staged a successful coup against their superior officers on the Divan and forced the pasha to appoint their elected leader as head of government—in which capacity he continued to bear the title dey. The deys, their Turkish infantry reinforced by spahis (locally recruited cavalry), were secure in their control of the cities and the detribalized coastal region but relied on a civilian official, the bey, to oversee the government of the tribes and to collect taxes in the hinterland with his private army of Tunisian auxiliaries. Such was the strength in the countryside of one of these officials, Corsican renegade Murad Bey (d. 1631), that he secured hereditary title for his family both to the beylicate and also to the office of pasha-regent. The political history of seventeenth-century Tunisia thus became one of the struggle between the dey—backed by the janissaries and the Turkish bureaucracy—and the bey-pasha—who increasing came to be identified with the interests of the old Arab elite—for control of the apparatus of government.

After 1666 the bey-pasha dictated the choice of the dey and gradually relieved him of his duties as head of government. The beylicate, in the meantime, had established itself as the representative of order and stability against tribal anarchy and military indiscipline. Tunisian naval units were dispatched to reinforce the Turkish navy in time of war, and the sultan—as caliph—was recognized as the spiritual leader of Islam; but, although it remained nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, Tunisia was in fact an independent state governed by a hereditary ruling house.

By the late seventeenth century trade had become a more important source of income than piracy. Commercial agreements were entered into with European trading partners, particularly France, and concessions for the development of trade were granted to foreign interests. Tunisia imported finished manufac-

tured goods in exchange for a variety of commodities—grain, olive oil, dates, hides, textiles, and sponges. Tunisian hatters enjoyed a monopoly on the sale of the *shashiya*, the red fez worn throughout the Ottoman world, which they made of Spanish wool imported by Jewish merchants in Tunis.

Husseinids

Continually troubled by the truculence of the janissaries and beset by unrest in the tribal areas, Tunisia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was also threatened by armed intervention from Algiers, whose dey claimed hegemony over the other autonomous Ottoman regencies in the Maghrib. In 1702 a janissary officer, Ibrahim al Sharif, murdered the bey-pasha, Murad III, together with his family, and seized control of the government in Tunis; but his regime was short-lived. Janissaries from Algeria invaded Tunisia in 1705 on the pretext of restoring legitimate government and took Ibrahim prisoner. Hussein ben Ali, an officer of Greek origin who had organized a credible defense against the Algerian janissaries, assumed the title of bey with the army's backing and subsequently secured the sultan's appointment as pasha. Hussein then defied the dey of Algiers, who plotted to reinstate Ibrahim in Tunis as his puppet, and named a member of his own family to succeed him as bey-pasha. A move by the Porte (Ottoman government) to install a regent in Tunis of its own picking when Hussein died in 1715 was thwarted when religious and military leaders rallied behind the Husseinid dynasty and the concept of Tunisian autonomy it represented.

The bey-pasha was an absolute monarch who directed the government in Tunis with the aid of a small cabinet. It was clear that he governed Tunisia for and in the name of the Turkish elite, who with officials recruited from the class of Mamluks (literally, slaves; non-Turkish subjects of the sultan conscripted for life into the service of the Ottoman Empire), to which Hussein had belonged, monopolized positions of authority in the central government. After Hussein, title to the beylicate remained within the ruling house according to a system by which the Husseinid prince regarded as best qualified to rule was designated heir apparent during the lifetime of the reigning bey. The choice of a successor was determined by the janissary officer corps, whose periodic coups in support of one or another rival Husseinid claimant were routinely legitimized in decrees issued by the Porte. A relatively strong ruler like Ali Bey (reigned 1759–82) assured the stability of his regime by acceding to the demands of the janissaries, but he also courted Arab support to counterbalance their power. Increasingly, the dynasty's policies came to reflect concern for the interests of the Arab urban elite in Tunis and the towns of the north and the Sahil.

Local government devolved on about sixty *caada* (sing., caid—see Glossary), appointed by the bey from local notables. Working beneath the caids were approximately 2,000 sheikhs who were

responsible for collecting taxes and maintaining order in tribal areas and provincial towns with the aid of Arab spahis put at the caids' disposal. At the end of the eighteenth century, however, tribal leaders commanding the loyalty of more than one-third of the bey's subjects in the highlands, steppes, and far south acted quite independently of his government's authority. Neglected as a fighting force, the army refrained from venturing into these areas to collect taxes; as state finances deteriorated, the beylicate was forced to look abroad for loans.

Whatever internal problems may have afflicted the Husseinid regime, European travelers reported that the Tunisians were the "most civilized people who inhabit the coast of the Mediterranean," superior in their politics and culture to the Algerians and given to commerce rather than to piracy. Although piracy was discouraged by the Husseinids, corsairs armed and sheltered in Tunisian ports continued to threaten trade and the security of seamen in the country's waters, and European maritime powers regularly paid tribute to the bey of Tunis and rulers of the other Barbary States (Morocco, Algiers, and Tripoli) to purchase immunity from attacks on their shipping. American merchant ships, no longer covered by British protection after the Revolutionary War, were seized by Barbary pirates in the years that followed United States independence, and American crews were enslaved in North Africa. In 1799 the United States entered into a treaty with the bey, guaranteeing him payment of tribute in return for a promise that Tunisian-based corsairs would not molest American shipping. In 1805, however, a Tunisian mission visited Washington to modify the treaty, and the annual tribute was eliminated in return for a trade agreement. An Anglo-French fleet imposed acceptance of a protocol on Tunisia in 1818 that prohibited further arming of corsairs and the enslavement of Christians in the Barbary States.

Ahmed Bey

The French occupation of neighboring Algeria in 1830, displacing the Ottoman regency there, was not a cause for alarm in Tunisia. It was considered a temporary measure and for a time held out the promise that Husseinid princes would be called on to rule in Oran and Constantine. French annexation of Algeria four years later, coupled with the reassertion of Turkish sovereignty in Tripoli in 1837, discouraged Tunisian optimism, however. The overriding concern of Ahmed Bey (reigned 1837–55) was to avoid giving an excuse for foreign intervention in Tunisia. Slavery was completely abolished and privateering suppressed in response to European objections, while steps were taken to put the beylicate's sovereignty and Tunisian independence beyond challenge.

The key to nationbuilding was the modernization of Tunisian institutions. Reformism, however, was an elite movement, totally lacking in popular support. Lacking the resources to finance reform or the machinery to manage it, the political elite had no

clear idea of what its goals ought to be. Without considerable success, administration was tightened up in an effort to bring all areas of the country under the control of the government in Tunis and to provide for more efficient tax collecting. As the military threat from France and Turkey had shown itself to be real, building a modern army was seen as an appropriate and realizable starting point for the reform movement. A military academy was established at the beylical palace at Bardo to provide officers, still predominantly of Turkish background, for a 26,000-man army that was intended to stand as a symbol of Tunisia's sovereignty. The new army was modeled on the recently reorganized Turkish army and was trained by French officers. The bey's government took out large loans from French banks to pay for the military build-up.

Ahmed Bey's mentor was his prime minister and treasurer, Mustafa Khaznader, who survived the bey and served continuously as head of the Tunisian government from 1837 to 1873. A Greek by origin, he had been carried off as a small child from Chios by the Turks when they ravaged that island during the Greek war for independence. Raised as a Muslim, Mustafa Khaznader had been Ahmed Bey's companion since their boyhood together and encouraged his master in debilitating debauchery. Primed to occupy a position of trust in the beylicate, Mustafa Khaznader was an embezzler on a large scale who ultimately led Tunisia into bankruptcy and opened the door for French economic and political penetration. Encouraged by the French, he promoted an ambitious public works program and accumulated an immense personal fortune by arranging loans to pay for it at exorbitant rates of interest in collusion with French banking houses.

Despite the bolstered armed forces and reformed administration that his regime offered as evidence of its modernity, Ahmed Bey's fear that Tunisia would be swallowed up by France or Turkey continued unabated and dictated the content of his foreign policy. The greater the threat from France was perceived to be, the closer Tunisia drew toward its nominal suzerain, the Ottoman sultan. The more persistent Turkey's pressure on Tunisia for formal recognition of the sultan's suzerainty, the more avidly French support was cultivated.

Foreign policy was an issue that divided Turkish and Arab elites within the reform movement. France encouraged Tunisia's assertion of its independence from the Ottoman Empire, a policy favored by the Turks in Tunis because it assured the continuance of the bey's authoritarian regime and their privileged position within it. During the same period, however, Great Britain backed the formal restoration of Ottoman sovereignty in Tunisia. Committed to propping up the Ottoman Empire as a barrier against Russian expansion, the British not only guaranteed its territorial integrity but also looked for opportunities to draw parts of the diffuse empire toward Constantinople and away from the influence of other European powers. Tunisia's Arab elite preferred the

British approach, believing that the connection with a reformed and revitalized Ottoman Empire would promote internal reform in their own country that would extend greater participation in government to them.

Ahmed Bey pawned the family jewels to send 4,000 Tunisian troops to the Crimean War (1854–56) and become in one stroke an ally of all the contenders for influence in his country. Tunisia was represented at the peace conference in Paris where the Ottoman Empire agreed to further constitutional and legal reforms proposed by its European allies, Great Britain and France, whose consuls in Tunis picked up the theme by recommending extension of similar reforms to Tunisia, "so as to be"—in the words of the British consul—"as modern as Turkey." Tunisian reformers were receptive and saw in suggestions for the constitutional restructuring of the government a means for achieving rapid modernization and economic development. Unquestionably, however, the immediate purpose of the European consuls in proposing specific legal reforms was to make it easier for European commercial interests to function in a country where Islamic codes prohibited equal application of the law to non-Muslims engaged in business there. In this divergence of interests lay the essential contradiction in the reform movement. For the Tunisian elites, reform was necessary to maintain their country's independence. But reform and modernization were also identified with Europeanization and would lead inevitably to greater European participation in Tunisia's political and economic affairs.

Constitution of 1861

In 1857 Ahmed Bey's successor, Mohamed Bey (reigned 1855–59), issued the so-called Fundamental Pact, which spelled out the principles regulating relations between the bey and his subjects and foreigners residing in Tunisia. The document, dictated to the beylicate by the French consul in Tunis, also allowed foreigners to own property in Tunisia and guaranteed them equal protection under the law.

The Fundamental Pact paved the way for the appointment of Kherredin Pasha, a Circassian Mamluk with long service in Tunisia and the son-in-law of Mustafa Khaznader, to draw up a constitution. Promulgated by Mohamed al Sadok Bey (reigned 1859–73) in 1861, it was the first written constitution in the Islamic world. Prefaced by a declaration of rights, the Constitution of 1861 provided for a limited and hereditary monarchy, with the bey as head of state, and a government headed by the prime minister of the bey's cabinet. The government was not directly responsible to the bey, however, but to the newly established Supreme Council, consisting of sixty members chosen on a rotating basis by the bey. The Supreme Council initiated legislation, approved tax measures, supervised the military establishment, and appointed public officials. Kherredin, author of the constitution, was chosen to be the body's first president. In what was a major innovation for a

Muslim country, the Constitution of 1861 also created the secular Supreme Court, empowered to review decisions of the sharia courts.

The constitutional reforms responded to the demands of an urban elite whose political and economic interests they clearly favored, but they were lacking in appeal for the rest of Tunisia. The introduction of constitutional government was associated in the popular mind with new and burdensome taxes, including levies on date and olive trees, that were more effectively collected by caids appointed by the Supreme Council who were often strangers in their jurisdictions. Opponents of the constitution also objected to concessions granted by the government to European companies to operate public services. Despite constitutional restraints imposed on the executive power of the beylicate, Kherredin resigned his office in frustration over the Supreme Council's inability to check the excesses of Mustafa Khaznader.

The most serious criticism of constitutional government came from provincial notables and tribal chiefs—the traditional leadership in the countryside—who recognized the Constitution of 1861 for what it was intended to be, an attack on local autonomy and tribalism that from the standpoint of the reformers was essential for the creation of a modern nation-state. Regional interests were therefore set in opposition to the influence of Tunis and the Sahil, where reform and the foreign investment it encouraged had been welcomed. Opponents of the constitution appealed over the bey to the sultan for relief. Rising popular resentment was capped by a serious tribal rebellion that forced the suspension of the constitution in 1864. Although Tunisia's experiment with constitutional government had failed for want of deep-rooted popular support, the nationalist movement was premised on the demand for the restoration of the Constitution of 1861.

Kherredin

Mustafa Khaznader's policies and the corruption of his government had by 1864 plunged Tunisia into an economic crisis. When money came into short supply, new currency was issued that was so devalued that foreign traders refused to accept it as a medium of exchange. Devaluation depressed the export price of Tunisian grain and at the same time made it impossible for Tunisian buyers to import necessities. These difficulties were compounded by bad harvests, famine, and plague that afflicted the country in 1867 and for several years thereafter. By 1868 Tunisia was bankrupt, and the government was unable to meet its financial commitments abroad. That same year, the bey agreed to the establishment of the International Financial Commission (IFC) in Tunis whose members included French, British, and Italian controllers charged with reorganizing Tunisia's finances in order to ensure payment of the country's existing debt and to curb further expenditures. Kherredin served as Tunisian representative on the commission.

In 1871 Tunisia reaffirmed the suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan, gaining a British guarantee of its territorial integrity. Control of foreign relations was surrendered to the Porte. Although the IFC retained jurisdiction over economic affairs, absolute authority over all other internal matters was left to the bey and his ministers. Mustafa Khaznader was finally removed in 1873 from the office that he had held for thirty-six years and was succeeded as prime minister by his son-in-law and long-time political rival, Kherredin.

Kherredin had begun his career in Tunisia as a soldier and, after rising rapidly in the beylicate's administration, was entrusted with diplomatic missions abroad. He was already a leader of the reform movement when chosen to draw up the constitution and, after its suspension, wrote a learned treatise dealing with the question of political and social reform in Muslim states. Positive in his expectations of what could be achieved, Kherredin was also realistic in his aims for Tunisia.

As prime minister, Kherredin faced the problem of satisfying the European powers represented on the IFC, while working to preserve Tunisia's independence and, although he was a modernizer, the Muslim character of its society. Like Ahmed Bey, he was concerned with maintaining the army as a symbol of sovereignty, but he also saw the practical need for overhauling the bureaucracy. Perhaps the outstanding achievement of his regime was the founding of the Sadiki College, a secondary school with a modern curriculum intended to train candidates for the civil service.

Cooperating closely with the IFC, Kherredin introduced fiscal reforms that markedly improved Tunisia's financial position, but European opposition stymied other essential reforms. Tunisia's export trade in grain was locked into the European market system and was monopolized by French and Italian merchants. Land exploitation by foreigners, allowed after 1857, was capital intensive rather than labor intensive and had led to the eviction of peasants from their farmsteads, resulting in severe rural unemployment. Kherredin's efforts at agrarian reform to correct the situation drew him into conflict with entrenched European landowning interests.

Having spent his life as a professional servant of the state dependent on the bey's patronage, Kherredin was without a political base of his own in the country. As a reforming prime minister, he met with opposition from the followers of Mustafa Khaznader, whom he had deprived of office, and from traditionalists who had marked him as the candidate of the Europeans. Kherredin had indeed been given a mandate by the European powers to make Tunisia safer for foreign investment; but, when he appeared to be succeeding all too well in modernizing the country's political and economic structure, they cooled toward his regime and finally withdrew support. Under French pressure, Kherredin was dismissed from office in 1877 and replaced by Mustafa ben Ismail, a

French puppet who compounded corruption with incompetence in office.

Kherredin was called to Constantinople, where he was made grand vizier to the Ottoman sultan, Abdel Hamid. It is one of the ironies of the history of the country that a Circassian Mamluk came to be regarded as the father of Tunisian nationalism.

French Protectorate

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878 Great Britain agreed to allow France a "free hand" in Tunisia in exchange for French acquiescence to the leasehold on Cyprus that the British had acquired from Turkey. It was accepted among the European powers that France planned to occupy Tunisia, but no excuse for French intervention presented itself until April 1881 when a punitive expedition was launched into Tunisian territory, ostensibly in pursuit of Khumiri tribesmen who had raided across the border into Algeria. The considerable force of more than 40,000 men—which the French explained was necessary to avoid undue bloodshed—was more effectively utilized in overawing the Tunisian government, however, than it was in hunting down nomadic tribesmen. French cavalry advanced on Tunis while seaborne units landed at Bizerte and occupied the port, considered potentially the best naval base in North Africa but far distant from Khumiri country.

With French troops poised near the capital, the French representative in Tunis confronted the bey at the Bardo Palace with a treaty, a draft of which reportedly had lain for years in the files of the French Foreign Ministry, that sanctioned the temporary military occupation of strategic points in Tunisia to put an end to disorders there. Theoretically, Tunisian sovereignty was left intact, although a resident minister was posted to Tunis to represent the French Republic and to advise the bey. Al Sadok Bey signed the Bardo Treaty on the condition that French troops not enter the city.

Long-range French political and economic interests in Tunisia went well beyond the momentary question of frontier security. Al Sadok Bey's tilt toward Italy had given substance to French alarm at Italian claims to a sphere of influence in Tunisia that were based both on geography and on the presence of a well-established colony of Italian settlers in the country. The French action was understood, therefore, as a preemptive intervention. In the economic sphere the French argued that Tunisia was a backward and impoverished country incapable of coping with its indebtedness.

Once the Khumiri had submitted, most of the French forces were promptly withdrawn, leaving behind only small garrisons to enforce the treaty's provisions. No sooner had the French pullout begun, however, than the bey, influenced by Mustafa ben Ismail, disavowed the treaty on the grounds that he had signed it under duress. In the belief that a show of force would bring Turkish aid, the Tunisians attacked the French garrisons. Reacting swiftly, the

French invaded Tunisia for the second time in a matter of weeks, occupied Tunis, and subjected Safaqis to a naval bombardment. By the end of October resistance in the north had been crushed, and in November Qabis fell to the French. In the south, however, Ali ben Khalifa, a tribal chieftain assisted by the Turks in Tripoli, held out through the 1882–83 winter. In June 1883 a humiliated Ali Bey (reigned 1882–1900) agreed to the Al Marsa Convention, which confirmed Tunisian acceptance of the Bardo Treaty and added provisions whereby "in order to facilitate to the French Government the exercise of its *protectorate* His Highness the Bey of Tunis engages to make such administrative, judicial, and financial reforms as the French Government considers useful."

Under the protectorate Tunisia was governed according to a system of dual sovereignties in which the de facto sovereignty of France was superimposed on the de jure sovereignty of the beylicate. Tunisia remained what it had been for 300 years, the "Regency of Tunisia." The preexisting form of beylical government was maintained intact, and the established political elite continued to function within it. Although the elite readily assimilated French values, Tunisian society retained its own social standards and a tradition of higher culture that were the core of the country's sense of its nationhood. The demographical impact of the protectorate was not severe in Tunisia, where European corporate development of the land rather than European settlement remained the rule.

The protectorate succeeded where Tunisian reformers had not in modernizing administration and providing Tunisia with a government that could collect taxes efficiently, ensure the rule of law applied throughout the country, and stimulate the growth of a modern economic and social service infrastructure. Fiscal affairs were rigorously supervised, and gradually Tunisia achieved financial stability and even prosperity. Railroads, port facilities, hospitals, schools, and sanitation works were constructed under French direction. Corporate investment from France created a modern agricultural sector, specializing in olive and grape production, that turned Tunisia once again into a net exporter of foodstuffs. Tunisia's phosphate reserves were exploited and ancillary industries developed.

The standard for French administration in Tunisia was set early by Pierre Paul Cambon, resident minister from 1882 to 1885, then resident general until 1886. Cambon, who distinguished himself as a diplomat later in his career, pressed for the formal declaration of a protectorate after the breakdown of the Bardo Treaty and is credited with drafting the Al Marsa Convention in which the term *protectorate* was used for the first time to describe the relationship between Tunisia and France. An ardent republican suspicious of the military, Cambon firmly established civil control over the protectorate. On his recommendation, Tunisia's foreign debt was consolidated in a single 125 million franc loan from France, which

eliminated the need for the multinational IFC and with it direct British and Italian influence on Tunisia's financial affairs.

Cambon, more than most of his successors, was scrupulous in observing the legal prerogatives of the bey as a sovereign monarch who had contracted with France to develop his country's administrative institutions and economy. He was conscious that France had definite responsibilities in Tunisia beyond colonial aggrandizement. Despite the acknowledged contributions made by France in Tunisia after 1881, however, it must be recognized that they were accomplished primarily for the benefit of France—or, more specifically, to protect French investment in Tunisia—and that Europeans, not Tunisians, were the primary beneficiaries of Tunisia's economic development under the protectorate. An economic infrastructure was built that served the French markets to which Tunisian production was tied and bore little relation to the basic needs of the traditional sector of the economy to which the majority of Tunisians were restricted. Tunisian tax revenues paid for government-sponsored projects that improved transportation, marketing facilities, and utilities, but the income generated by these expenditures ultimately accrued to a handful of French-owned companies and large landowners and to French building contractors.

Administration of the Protectorate

After the Al Marsa Convention the bey continued to appoint a cabinet, but its members were named on the advice of the resident general, whose approval was required to validate every action taken by the beylical government. The resident general, who was responsible directly to the French foreign minister, was ex officio foreign minister in the Tunisian government, and his control over its foreign affairs was unquestioned. He was both the political representative of the French Republic in Tunisia and the protectorate's chief administrative officer, assisted in that task by a council of ministers composed of the bey's prime minister and two other Tunisian cabinet officers as well as by ten to twelve French heads of department seconded for service in the Tunisian government. Although the bey was legally the source of all authority, it was the resident general, who was usually given considerable latitude by Paris in determining policy, that exercised the beylical authority through a highly centralized administration operated by a staff of French bureaucrats whose influence stretched from the bey's palace to the lowest level of local government. After 1896 the Consultative Conference, a body composed of Tunisian delegates appointed by the resident general and representatives elected by French residents, was impaneled to advise the resident general on a broad range of topics; but it did not have the power either to introduce measures or to question executive actions. French legislation did not apply in Tunisia, but laws enacted in France were often introduced by beylical decrees.

Reformed local government followed recognizably traditional patterns but was made more systematic and became uniform in its organization in most parts of the country (see fig. 5). Five regions (provinces) were created (Tunis, Bizerte, Le Kef, Sousse, and Sfax), which were administered by French regional chiefs. The regions were subdivided into nineteen districts, each under a French civil controller. There were further divided into the traditional *caidats* and, in the countryside, sheikhats. Special status was given to fifty-nine municipal communes that provided local government for the cities and larger towns in each district. In the south the so-called military territories came under the jurisdiction of French army area commanders, whose mission it was to keep the peace in the sparsely settled hinterland as well as to defend the ill-defined border with Turkish-controlled and, after 1911, Italian-controlled Tripolitania.

The functions of the caids and sheikhs under the protectorate were unchanged—to collect taxes and maintain order in the countryside. A native gendarmerie served under the orders of the caids, who worked closely with French police superintendents. Appointed by the bey on the recommendation of the resident general, the caids and sheikhs were intended to be an important link between the French authorities and the rural population. French policy favored these secular officers over the ulama and *cudah*, who had been indifferent when not openly hostile to the reform movement. Although drawn from the traditional leadership in the countryside, they were increasingly resented as being agents of the French and became alienated from the people whom they governed.

The Tunisian court system, like the central administration and local government, was reformed and then operated under French tutelage. Sharia courts administered law affecting the personal status of Tunisians in such areas as marriage and inheritance, but, through usage, principles of the French Civil Code were gradually imposed on Islamic law. Laws of property, in particular, were modified in this manner. Decisions of the sharia courts affecting Europeans were automatically subject to review by civil magistrates, and all criminal cases were reserved for French courts. Appeals from both the sharia courts and the French courts in Tunisia were made in the first instance to the Court of Appeal in Algiers and ultimately to the Court of Cassation (French superior court of appeal) in Paris.

Prior to World War I the French army routinely stationed about 25,000 men, including units of the Foreign Legion, in Tunisia. Tunisians as well as all French citizens resident in Tunisia were subject to French military service, although in practice few of the former were called up because volunteers were so plentiful. Tunisian infantry regiments—*tirailleurs* (riflemen)—and mounted spahis served under French officers as part of the regular French army in Tunisia and in various parts of the French colonial empire,

Figure 5. Tunisia under the French Protectorate, 1881–1956

while the bey's own French-trained "army" numbered only about 600 men and was employed for ceremonial purposes. Bizerte was developed as a major French naval base strategically located at the narrows of the Mediterranean. Observers testified that possession of Bizerte alone would have made the Tunisian protectorate worthwhile.

Economic and Social Development

Traditional patterns of landholding in Tunisia were collective. No individual title existed for *arch* (tribal land), which was considered the inalienable property of the tribe as a whole. It did not have definite boundaries but might expand in size or shift location as the needs of the tribe, the climate, or the condition of the land changed. Under other kinds of tenure, more common in the north and in the Sahil, land was the collective possession of a family or a village. Use over a period of time was proof of ownership, and continued use was necessary to retain it. One-third of Tunisia's best farmland, concentrated in grain-growing areas, was *habus*, property held in perpetuity by religious institutions as endowments for the maintenance of mosques and shrines and to support public welfare and religious education.

The bey derived part of his income from beylical or crown lands, extensive tracts acquired over the years by conquest and confiscation that, according to Muslim law, belonged to the state and passed by right to whomever ruled it. Large estates were also held by Turkish families and by members of the government in clientage from the bey. Beylical land was also let out to landholders on long-term leases.

As the government's financial situation worsened in the 1850s and 1860s, beylical land was sold for ready cash and converted to freehold. The growth of a class of peasant proprietors who could operate above the subsistence level on the land that they purchased was offset by the increase of a rural proletariat, which had been dispossessed of the land confiscated by the bey to be put on sale. In 1859 sale of land to Europeans was made legal. In some cases Tunisian farmers saw their traditional lands sequestered and sold to French-owned companies whose managers in turn hired them as laborers.

The famine and cholera epidemic that struck Tunisia in 1868 hit hardest in the most populous and productive areas. The countryside lay empty where fields had been abandoned and villages deserted. The population in marginal areas reverted to nomadism, while others fled the country. The demographic impact was devastating: Tunisia's population, estimated at 1.6 million in 1867, stood at only 900,000 in 1881 and had shown no marked growth as late as 1890.

French buyers took advantage of Tunisia's distress and the beylicate's bankruptcy to acquire land abandoned during the plaque years, including them in the growing European-operated modern agricultural sector that specialized in olive and grape production

for export. As a result of investment in land by French-owned companies, France had established its economic domination over Tunisia years before the protectorate imposed political control as well.

French law recognized only individual ownership of a property, a practice that was at variance with Tunisian traditions of collective holdings. Because so much Tunisian land could not be alienated from its collective ownership under Muslim law, a legal framework was constructed through which European landowners could ensure their title to property that they had acquired. In 1885 the beylicate published a decree requiring registration of titles to land. An application for a title was then advertised. If it was not claimed by another party within a given period of time, the applicant received undisputed title to the property in question. Challenges to an application were considered by a mixed tribunal of Tunisian and French magistrates. The latter formed the majority on the tribunal, which usually found in favor of European applicants. Tunisians also took advantage of the new law, however, to lay claim to tribal and other collectively held land.

By 1892 more than one-fifth of Tunisia's arable land, concentrated in the north, was French owned, but 90 percent of it was in the hands of only sixteen landowners and companies engaged in capital-intensive agriculture. Fewer than 10 percent of the French residents were engaged in farming. In 1897 a fund was established to pay the cost of settling French colons (colonists), and the next year the beylicate allowed *habus* land to be put on the market. But, despite inducements offered by the French government and by private colonization societies in France, there was no rush of colons to Tunisia as there had been to Algeria.

More than 10,000 Italians lived in Tunisia in 1881 as compared with fewer than 4,000 French residents, and they remained the largest ethnic group within the European community throughout the period of the protectorate. By 1901 the size of the European community had increased to approximately 130,000, two-thirds of it Italian but also including a large number of Maltese. The Europeans were occupationally differentiated: the Italians, mostly Sicilians, were blue-collar workers, serviced public utilities, or had small farms. The Maltese, who were British subjects, were the proverbial shopkeepers. Tunisians rubbed shoulders constantly with these Europeans, confronted them in the marketplace, and competed with them for jobs. Shut out from the social and economic advantages that were reserved for French citizens, the Italians were held in contempt by both the Tunisians and the French. Except for members of the elite, Tunisians seldom had contact with the French—the administrators, supervisors, managers, and owners; even the elite did not meet them on a social level.

Traditional education in Tunisia was highly developed before 1881, and the school of the Zituna mosque in Tunis was recog-

nized as one of the leading centers of classical Islamic studies. Under the protectorate the French residency continued the emphasis on education, patronizing Zituna and the Muslim schools as well as Kherredin's Sadiki College, which was accredited as a lycée and set the standard for a bilingual, bicultural school system, offering instruction to a mixed student body, that was extended throughout the country. Many Tunisian graduates of these schools went on to complete their education in France. Within a generation a class of well-educated, gallicized Tunisians—the *évolués* (literally, the evolved ones)—had been created that formed a new social elite among their countrymen. Strongly influenced by French culture and political attitudes—and particularly attracted by a Cartesian or rationalistic inquiry that was alien to the Islamic tradition—they nonetheless became the core of a highly motivated nationalist movement.

Rise of Nationalism

Tunisian nationalism was elitist in its origins, with its roots in the schools rather than in a popular mass movement. After 1881 Kherredin's disciples at the Sadiki College continued their emphasis on political and economic modernization, which could be accomplished under French auspices, they urged, without Tunisians either approving the protectorate or openly attacking France. The nationalists in the schools initially reacted to the particular form of the protectorate that excluded Tunisians from full participation in their own government, but they stopped short of advocating a break with France. Ali Bash Hambak, an intellectual leader of graduates of the Sadiki College, argued for the selective adoption of Western scientific rationalism not only for political reform but for reinvigorating Tunisia's Arabic and Islamic culture as well. In 1896, however, Bashir Sfar, a member of Hambak's circle, broke with him and established the revivalist Khalduniya Institute, named in honor of Ibn Khaldun, which was dedicated to restricting the influence of French culture and restoring traditional Arab-Islamic culture in its pure form. Both Hambak's group from the bilingual Sadiki College and Sfar's followers at the Khalduniya Institute were eventually associated with the embryonic nationalist movement, providing it with public platforms and with an influx of articulate converts. Subsidized by the residency as were other Islamic institutions, the Khalduniya Institute undertook to give instruction in modern subjects to graduates of Zituna to enable them to compete for positions in the civil service and to enter the professions.

In 1908 the Hambak and Sfar factions reunited to form a nationalist political organization, the Young Tunisians. They were a small group, interested in efficiency rather than representative government, whose newspaper, *Le Tunisien*, was aimed at convincing liberal French readers that the Tunisian elite was capable of taking over a greater share of responsibility for the country's management. Proud of their education and accomplishments,

their liberal politics and competence in French, they were conscious of their distinct Tunisian nationality. But popular feeling responded to bread-and-butter issues. To broaden their appeal, the Young Tunisians became involved in a labor dispute in 1912 that turned on obtaining jobs for Tunisians in the public transportation system reserved for Italians. Implicated in the rioting that resulted, the Young Tunisians were disbanded and many of their leaders sent into exile. Despite growing discontent with the protectorate and residual pro-Turkish feeling, more than 60,000 Tunisians served in the French army during World War I, suffering 40,000 casualties, and many more tens of thousands were recruited for work in France.

Postwar Tunisian nationalism drew its inspiration as much from the French liberal thought imbibed at the schools as from the pan-Arab movement and the native traditions of Kherredin. Nationalist activists gravitated toward the Destour (literally, Constitution) Party, founded in 1920 by Abdelaziz al Thalibi, a graduate of Zituna who had been one of the leaders of the Young Tunisians exiled in 1912. Typically, they came from the bourgeoisie and the traditional ruling elite—Turks from Tunis, religious lawyers, civil servants, businessmen, merchants, and professionals—who were social conservatives and economic liberals. The Destour Party, from the start, was consciously urban and Muslim in its orientation, standing aloof from working-class movements and with few ties to the countryside. It met with the antipathy of the ulama and the court party around the bey. The French made the error of overrating the party's importance, attempting to link it at one time with the Communists, and thereby contributed to Thalibi's prestige as a nationalist leaders.

Although Thalibi denounced the protectorate, he did not propose severing Tunisia's links with France completely but advocated a formal association between the two sovereign states. In collaboration with Ahmed Saqqa, he wrote *La Tunisie martyre* (Martyred Tunisia), a book published in Paris in 1921 that served as the party's manifesto. It was the seminal work of Tunisian nationalist political literature. Thalibi held that there was a viable Tunisian state, capable of modernization under its own constitution, before the French occupation and that France, whose political ideals were admired, had betrayed its own liberal values in depriving Tunisia of its independence. He looked to the Fundamental Pact and the Constitution of 1861 as the basis on which Tunisian independence could be restored.

The Destourian reform program was gradualist and, in order to reassure French opinion, Thalibi reiterated that the party was not revolutionary in its aims. In fact, time and events caused the Destourians to modify Kherredin's constitution. They called for the election of a deliberative assembly composed of Tunisian and European representatives, elected by universal suffrage, who were to have equal voting rights. The bey's government was to be

responsible to the assembly, which would have complete control over finances. Basic freedoms were to be guaranteed, and education was to be compulsory within a bilingual school system. More immediately, the Destourians, whose constituency included many civil servants, demanded appointment of Tunisians to the government positions that they were capable of filling and "equal pay for equal work" with their French colleagues.

The French residency used both the carrot and the stick in its response to the demands of the Destour Party. Minor reforms were quickly instituted to pacify Tunisian sentiment, and the Ministry of Justice was opened up to Tunisian applicants; but repressive measures were taken against the most outspoken of the nationalists, and restrictions were imposed on political activities. Nasir Bey (reigned 1906–22) was provoked by the French crackdown to threaten to abdicate in solidarity with the nationalists. In 1922 the residency acquiesced further in the formation of the Grand Council, which replaced the Consultative Conference and gave Tunisians a greater voice in government, together with local councils that duplicated its work at the regional level.

Hardly comparable to the legislature envisioned by the Destourians, the Grand Council was composed of two sections—one Tunisian, elected indirectly through the regional councils, and the other European, whose delegates were elected directly or took their seats as representatives of the Chamber of Commerce. Voting by section rather than by individual delegates ensured the preponderance of the European section. To become effective, actions recommended by the Grand Council had to be ratified by the resident general, who also cast the deciding vote in case of split decisions. A mixed committee from the Grand Council was also selected to join the cabinet in its deliberations. The resident general prepared the budget in consultation with the Grand Council, but the government was in no way responsible to it for its actions.

The reform package, intended by the French to mollify nationalist sentiment and to disarm support for the Destour Party, was capped in 1923 by an offer to grant French citizenship to Tunisians who qualified by education or service. The nationalists, as well as members of the bey's entourage and religious leaders, were incensed at the insensitivity of the proposal, which was recognized as an infringement on Tunisian sovereignty. To become French citizens, Muslims in Tunisia were required to accept the full jurisdiction of the French legal code, including laws affecting personal status, and reject the competence of the religious courts. Because of the unitary nature of Islam, this meant, in effect, that a Muslim must renounce his religion. Few Tunisians applied for French citizenship, and those that did—for the most part *évolués* who were part of the French administration—were ostracized by the Muslim community at large.

The palliative offered by minimal reform failed to stall the nationalist movement. The Destourians' demands for implementation of their full constitutional program increased in intensity during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The economic depression, which fell heavily on Tunisia, served as a catalyst for political activism. Nonviolent in its origins, the party took Tunisian discontent into the streets. The residency was harried by strikes and by demonstrations that were put down with severity by the French police. In 1933 the resident general ordered the disbanding of the Destour Party.

Leadership of the nationalist movement was already passing to a new generation of French-educated Tunisians, more at ease in French than in Arabic, who crystallized ideas of national identity and populism as the old leadership had been unable and unwilling to do and who adopted tactics that emphasized constant activism and violent resistance to the protectorate. Younger members of the Destour Party had argued that nationalism, in order to be effective against the French, had to break loose from its traditional power base in the urban elite and mobilize mass support. Among the more impatient of the party activists were Mahmoud Materi, Tahar Sfar, and a lawyer, Habib Bourguiba. They came from the Sahil, an area less impacted by European landholdings than the north, more North African in character, and less cosmopolitan than Tunis. But they were more westernized than the older Destourian leaders and lacked their strong religious sympathies. All had been educated at the Sadiki College and in France, where they had been profoundly influenced by the ideas of the intellectual left. In 1934 Bourguiba and his colleagues formed the radical Neo-Destour (New Constitution) Party and called in the pages of their newspaper, *La Voix du Tunisien*, for responsible constitutional government. Like the old Destourians, they advocated creation of a legislature representing Tunisians and Europeans on an equal basis and an end to the protectorate. Although supporting the beylicate as a necessary expedient during the hoped-for transition to independence, they looked forward to the establishment of a Tunisian republic.

Support for the Neo-Destour Party came from artisans, shopkeepers, and peasant proprietors, who in the midst of the depression of the 1930s were more interested in maintaining their standard of living than in expelling the French, as well as from students and the professional classes that had backed the old Destourians. The new party's cadres were highly disciplined and organized in cells throughout the country. Working relations were formed with student, labor, and agricultural organizations. French authorities and the colons were terrified by the appeal and effectiveness of the new nationalist party, and its organizers, including Bourguiba, were arrested and jailed. But the Neo-Destour cells continued to function underground and recruit new members.

The victory of the Popular Front in France in 1936 and the formation of a left-wing government under Leon Blum held out hope to the Tunisian nationalists, who redoubled agitation for political and economic reforms and abolition of the despised citizenship law. Released from prison, Bourguiba resumed leadership of the Neo-Destour Party. Faced with opposition within the nationalist movement from a revived moderate Destour Party, Bourguiba's party became more radical, promoting labor unrest, work stoppages, and demonstrations through the summer of 1937. Blum's government fell after fifteen months in power, having achieved little in the way of reaching a settlement in Tunisia, except to have aroused nationalist anticipation of reform. The colons, who had become increasingly defensive as they saw their privileged position threatened, petitioned the new government in Paris to take effective action against the nationalist demonstrations. On April 9, 1938—commemorated in Tunisia as Martyrs' Day—122 Tunisians were killed in nationalist-inspired rioting. The nationalist parties were outlawed once again, and Bourguiba was arrested.

France and Italy

The Tunisian question had remained alive as an issue in Italy after 1881. Although Italy reluctantly acquiesced in the French occupation of a country that it had also coveted, Italian public figures periodically gave voice to a lingering resentment at having been "cheated" of Tunisia by France. Complaints by Italian settlers against the French administration were a continuing irritant in relations between France and Italy, but Italians retained a special position in Tunisia, operating a separate school system sponsored by the Italian government. Italy's occupation of Libya in 1911 gave it a common colonial border with the French in Tunisia. France and Italy were allies in World War I, but relations steadily deteriorated after the rise of Benito Mussolini's fascist regime in Italy in 1922. Italian settlers in Tunisia came to be viewed as a potential security threat.

Legislation in 1921 provided that all Europeans born after that date in Tunisia would automatically have French nationality. Protests were lodged by both Italy and Great Britain against compulsory naturalization, which would entail liability for conscription, and in 1923 the British put the matter before the Permanent Court of International Justice in The Hague. The court found that Tunisian-born children of British subjects—the Maltese—would be entitled to reject French nationality, although that right could not be applied to succeeding generations. Many Italians, made uneasy by the rise of fascism in their homeland, voluntarily sought and received French citizenship, however; as a result the 1924–25 period marked the point at which for the first time French citizens accounted for more than half of the European community in Tunisia, numbering nearly 200,000. Italians were also under economic pressure to become French citizens, which meant being eligible

for better pay—particularly in public utilities, where many of them were employed.

In 1935 Mussolini, who was anxious to ensure French noninvolvement in his Ethiopian campaign, agreed to a treaty proposed by French Premier Pierre Laval that would have gradually rescinded the special legal status of Italians in Tunisia and phased out their autonomous school system. The treaty also determined that after a thirty-year transitional period all Tunisian-born offspring of Italian parents would become French citizens. It is doubtful if Mussolini, who at that time already had reason to anticipate a radical alteration of the balance of power in Europe, considered these concessions to be permanently binding.

While on tour in Libya two years later, Mussolini proclaimed himself the "Sword of Islam" and offered Italy as the protector of Muslims under French and British rule. Italy became more reckless in putting forward its claim to Tunisia—as well as in citing its irredentist aspirations for Corsica and Nice—and in 1938 openly denounced the French protectorate. Frightened at the prospect of an Italian invasion, Tunisians rallied behind France as Europe moved toward war and demonstrated their support on the occasion of French Premier Edouard Daladier's visit to Tunis in January 1939.

World War II

With the fall of France in June 1940, Tunisia's border with Libya and the large naval base at Bizerte were demilitarized. Tunisian ports and airfields were used, however, to give logistical support to Axis forces in Libya. The French colons were generally sympathetic to the Vichy regime, and the Fascists had for years been building areas of support in the Italian community. Shortly after the French surrender a pro-Vichy naval officer, Admiral Jean Pierre Estéva, was appointed resident general in Tunis and given broad responsibilities for defense.

Allied landings in Algeria and Morocco in November 1942, code named Operation Torch, had as an objective the speedy occupation of Tunisia, with the cooperation of French authorities and armed forces there. Admiral Jean Darlan, the French high commissioner in North Africa, who had initially offered resistance to the landings, ordered a cease-fire when word reached him that the Germans had moved into Vichy-controlled France, and he surrendered Algiers to Allied commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower. In Tunis the resident general hesitated to act on Darlan's orders and awaited confirmation from Vichy. His delay allowed quick-moving German forces to relieve the French garrisons and occupy key positions in Tunisia ahead of the Allies, including the naval base at Bizerte, which was turned over to the Axis without a fight.

American airborne units took Qafsah in mid-November, but Allied attempts to mount a concentrated drive on Tunis before German reinforcements could be introduced failed. Allied air and

naval power cut off supplies to the Axis forces by sea, but between December 1942 and March 1943 more than 40,000 German and Italian troops were ferried by air from Sicily to Tunisia. Supported at one point during the campaign by an estimated one-quarter of the Luftwaffe's tactical force, they held nine American, British, and Free French divisions along a line that stretched from the north coast down the spine of the Eastern Dorsale to the desert while fourteen divisions of General (later Field Marshal) Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps retreated westward across Libya and into Tunisia before the advancing British Eighth Army (see fig. 6).

In January Rommel hurled an armored attack at the untried United States II Corps and broke through at the strategic Kasserine Pass, throwing Allied forces in his rear off balance while the Afrika Korps prepared to defend the Mareth Line in the south. The Mareth Line was a twenty-two-mile-long defense system constructed by the French before the war against the threat of an Italian invasion. When frontal assaults against the Mareth Line were turned back, Eighth Army commander Bernard Montgomery sent Bernard Freyberg's New Zealand Division on a wide end run around the German defenses to force the narrow defile at Djebel Tebaga, compelling General Oskar von Armin, who had succeeded the ailing Rommel in command of the Africa Korps, to abandon the Mareth Line in March. Early in April units of II Corps advancing from the west linked up with the Eighth Army at the Wadi al Akarit. Von Armin's skillful withdrawal, however, saved the bulk of his army to take up the defense of Tunis along a new line at Enfidaville.

The Enfidaville front held firm, but at the end of April the Allies opened an offensive from the west. On May 7 Tunis was taken by the British, and II Corps entered Bizerte, trapping tens of thousands of Axis troops between their pincers, while a British sweep through Cape Bon cut off the remaining Germans and Italians facing the Eighth Army at Enfidaville. Axis resistance in Tunisia ceased on May 13, and the African war was brought to a close. Fewer than 700 of the 250,000 German and Italian troops engaged in the battle of Tunisia escaped death or capture. Control of airbases in Tunisia and the naval facility at Bizerte was crucial for the success of the subsequent Allied invasion of Sicily and the mainland of Italy.

Bourguiba's Tunisia

When it was dissolved for the second time in 1938, the Neo-Destour had an active party membership of approximately 100,000. Its underground activities were directed by an executive committee, the Political Bureau, after Bourguiba's imprisonment. Some nationalists at the lower level of party echelons urged support for Germany in 1939 in the belief that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," but their enthusiasm for the Axis waned when Italy, with its annexationist designs on Tunisia, entered the war shortly before the fall of France. More significantly,

Figure 6. The Battle for Tunisia, November 1942 to May 1943

Bourguiba had spoken from prison in favor of cooperation with France from the outset of the war. He continued to oppose collaboration after the French defeat in 1940, when he was transferred to a more secure prison facility in Marseilles by the Vichy regime. The Germans freed Bourguiba after the Allied landings in North Africa, lionized him and other nationalist leaders in Rome where they were brought for talks, and then repatriated him to Axis-occupied Tunisia.

Bourguiba anticipated the Allied victory in the European war and swung his support behind the Free French. An instinctive liberal, he expressed confidence that "the whole of France, once liberated from the Nazi yoke, would not forget . . . her true friends, those who stood by her in the days of trial." Once the Free French were established in Tunisia, Bourguiba, together with Musif Bey (reigned 1926–43), proposed a gradual evolution toward internal autonomy for the country. Ignored by French authorities, Bourguiba appealed to the British and Americans to bring influence to bear on Free French leader Charles de Gaulle to grant Tunisia political concessions. Through the United States consul in Tunis, Hooker Doolittle, who had advocated United States support for Tunisian independence, Bourguiba made direct contact with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Late in 1943 Musif Bey was deposed by the French on the pretext that he had collaborated with the enemy. Fearing that similar charges would be leveled against him, Bourguiba escaped to Egypt, leaving Salah Ben Youssef behind in Tunisia as secretary general of the Neo-Destour Party. Bourguiba spent the years until 1950 pleading the case of Tunisian independence in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States.

Agitation for political reform continued to mount in Bourguiba's absence as Tahar ben Ammar, moderate president of the Tunisian section of the Grand Council, joined a group of eighty "notables" to petition the French government for internal autonomy. In 1946 an autonomous trade union, the General Tunisian Labor Union (Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail—UGTT), backed by the American Federation of Labor (AFL), broke away from the communist-dominated French labor organization, the General Confederation of Workers (Confédération Générale des Travailleurs—CGT). Led by a one-time trolley driver, Ferhat Hached, the UGTT cooperated closely with the Neo-Destour Party.

Toward Independence

In 1950 Prime Minister Mohamed Shanniq formed a new government, one that for the first time since the Al Marsa Convention had a Tunisian majority in the cabinet. Ben Youssef, the Neo-Destour secretary general, joined the government as minister of justice, but it was Bourguiba who went to Paris to lay before the French government a program for gradual independence that included creation of a national legislature and emphasized demands for civil rights. The Tunisian proposal also insisted on

maintaining cultural, economic, and military ties with France. The French government refused out of hand to give up direct participation by French officials in the Tunisian government, but Foreign Minister Maurice Schuman confirmed that a newly appointed resident general "had been given the task of leading Tunisia to independence."

The residency offered only minor reforms, all of them eventually rejected by the nationalists. Terrorist groups directed attacks against French authorities and colons, who in turn formed counterterrorist vigilante units. The residency retaliated with a crackdown on all nationalists, moderates as well as extremists engaged in terrorist activities. In January 1952 the French demanded that Lamine Bey (reigned 1943–57) dismiss Shanniq as prime minister and, when the bey refused to comply, arrested Bourguiba, Shanniq, and most of his ministers. Ben Youssef, however, escaped the French net and fled to Egypt, where he fell increasingly under the influence of the pan-Arab nationalism of Gamal Abdul Nasser. In exile Ben Youssef became a vocal exponent of violent revolution.

The arrests intensified nationalist bitterness toward the protectorate and produced two years of terrorist violence, rioting, and strikes. UGTT leader Hached, a voice of moderation, was murdered by colon vigilantes, who thereby cut off a valuable channel for dialogue between the nationalists and the residency. Meanwhile, France's ability to cope with the growing unrest was compromised by its own political instability that had brought down five governments in two years and had left the country without a government for more than three months during that period. Tunisia, however, was a minor concern in Paris compared with the debacle in Indochina in the spring of 1954.

Early in 1954 Bourguiba was released from prison to negotiate with French Premiere Pierre Mendès-France. The nationalists and the French government were still deadlocked between Tunisian demands for full independence and the French plan, which called for internal autonomy despite vigorous objections from the colons. But Bourguiba showed a willingness to accept what France was prepared to offer while at the same time pressing for further concessions. In July Mendès-France, who had just concluded the dismantling of the French colonial empire in Indochina, flew to Tunis and issued the dramatic Declaration of Carthage, which recognized Tunisia's internal autonomy. The French preferred to have leaders of the old Destour Party guide the new semi-independent country, but continuing violence persuaded them to bring in Bourguiba, who made it clear that he accepted autonomy only as the first step toward full independence. Although he functioned as the power behind the new government, he refused to take part in it formally while the French presence remained.

The next major step toward the fulfillment of Bourguiba's demand for full independence came in June 1955 when French

Premier Edgar Faure and Tunisian Prime Minister Ben Ammar signed a series of agreements in Paris. The six agreements covered internal administration, status of residents, judicial reform, administrative and technical cooperation, cultural relations, and economic and financial relations. The most significant aspect of the agreements was the abrogation of Article 1 of the Al Marsa Convention of 1883, which gave the French resident general control over internal government. However, the Bardo Treaty, by which France obtained responsibility for Tunisia's foreign affairs and defense, remained in force.

Bourguiba endorsed the agreements as part of his pragmatic strategy for achieving independence with measured steps, but Ben Youssef, a close collaborator for many years, broke with him on the issue. Ben Youssef, who had returned to Tunisia, and the left-wing faction supporting him held out for immediate independence and contested Bourguiba's leadership of the Neo-Destour Party. When the party congress backed Bourguiba's gradualist policy, Ben Youssef returned to Cairo to lead an opposition movement from exile. Guerrilla units loyal to him conducted military operations against both the French and the new Tunisian governments.

The agreements, as they affected relations between the bey as monarch and the French government, required certain changes in Tunisia's governmental structure. By a decree in September 1955, al Amin Bey reaffirmed his absolute power but agreed to accept the advice of his prime minister, who was the president of the Council of Ministers (cabinet). While legislative and executive power remained formally in the hands of the bey, in effect the decree required the bey to have the approval of the full Council of Ministers before issuing a law. It also authorized elections for a constituent assembly and gave that assembly the right to establish the form of government that it wanted Tunisia to have.

The bey, aware of the threat to the monarch posed by a popularly elected assembly that was likely to be republican in its sympathies, was pressured into signing the decree for the Constituent Assembly by Bourguiba, who threatened to expose the bey's request that the French remain in Tunisia. Shortly thereafter the bey ratified Bourguiba's electoral law, which provided for straight majority list (male) voting, supposedly to ensure that the assembly would operate harmoniously to produce a strong government. Actually the law meant that party headquarters would select the candidates and that party lists would sweep the elections, although some effort was made to represent other interests in the assembly by consultation with labor, professional, and farmer organizations and formation of the so-called National Front.

Independent Tunisia

An agreement between France and Morocco early in 1956 indicated that Morocco, which had been a French protectorate since 1912, would soon gain complete independence, and it was hoped that the forthcoming election of the Constituent Assembly would

provide a means for pressing Tunisia's case for independence. On March 20, 1956, the patience of the Neo-Destour leaders was rewarded by the signing of a protocol that abrogated the Bardo Treaty of 1881 and recognized Tunisia as an independent state. The portfolios of the two ministries vacated by French officials—foreign affairs and defense—were taken by Bourguiba.

With independence the Neo-Destour Party, which had been jarred by dissent from Ben Youssef's faction, faced the problem of consolidating its leadership and replacing the struggle for national independence with the building of national consensus as the party's primary goal. Expelled from the party for his opposition to Bourguiba, Ben Youssef organized a leftist opposition party that continued the guerrilla war against the Neo-Destour government. The crisis ended only when a large-scale French military operation forced the Youssefists to lay down their arms in June, three months after independence. Ben Youssef was assassinated in Frankfurt by unknown assailants in 1961.

On March 25, 1956, some 84 percent of the registered voters went to the polls to elect candidates of the National Front, who were for the most part members of the Neo-Destour Party, to the Constituent Assembly. Bourguiba was elected president of the assembly by acclamation at its first session held two weeks later, and Ahmed Ben Salah was elected vice president. The assembly then divided its ninety-eight members into a number of committees, each charged with drafting a part of the new constitution. Within a week Article I had been unanimously adopted. It declared Tunisia to be a free, independent, sovereign state, with Islam its official religion and Arabic its official language. On April 15 the bey called on Bourguiba to form the new government.

Independence and the election of the Constituent Assembly left the constitutional base of the Tunisian government as it had been at the time of the decree of September 1955: the bey promulgated laws as decrees with the unanimous consent of his Council of Ministers. The Western-educated leaders of the Neo-Destour were instinctive republicans who had little affection for the beylicate, and they were far from satisfied with this arrangement. The aged al Amin Bey himself did not command much respect. He had increasingly withdrawn from public activity as the nationalists took charge of Tunisian politics after the 1955 conventions so that he counted little as a political force, and the ostentatious living of members of his family further detracted from his reputation. In July 1957 the Constituent Assembly, which had authority to determine the form of government, unanimously voted to depose the bey and abolish the monarchy, declaring Tunisia a republic. Bourguiba was named president of the republic and given the bey's full executive and legislative powers as head of state until the assembly could produce a consitution.

During the two years of his provisional presidency Bourguiba promulgated by executive decree a number of far-reaching re-

Capitol at Dougga (ancient Thugga)
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

forms that fulfilled—and went beyond—the promises made by the Neo-Destour before independence. The Neo-Destour had been a secular nationalist movement, and, while it had not rejected traditional Islam, neither had its program invited the participation of religious leaders. Once in power Bourguiba set about to eliminate religious regulations and customs that were considered "obsolete" in a modern country. Religious courts were abolished, even though this meant the forced retirement of many socially prominent judges. Laws governing marriage and the status of women were revised, giving Tunisian women legal rights comparable to—or in some cases greater than—those pertaining in France. Wearing of the veil by women in public, prescribed by strictly observant Muslims, was prohibited. At a later date, abortion and birth control were legalized. The school of the Zituna mosque was absorbed into the new University of Tunis. The *habus* system of landholding was abolished and agrarian reform instituted, affecting nearly 300,000 hectares of land in the rich Majardah Valley. A personal status law required all births and deaths to be registered and required each Tunisian national to adopt a surname, a rationalization that even the French had not proposed, thus reducing the confusion of names common in traditional Arab society. In his zeal for reform, however, Bourguiba occasionally appeared to overstep the bounds of propriety in a society that, though secularized, remained essentially Muslim. He was compelled by popular resistance, for instance, to relax his public effort to push a 1961 recommendation that Tunisians abandon fasting during Ramadan, a practice that is one of the traditional five pillars of Islam (see Religious Life, ch. 2).

Meanwhile, the Constituent Assembly committees had revised the draft of the constitution along lines that would make Tunisia a presidential republic rather than a French Fourth Republic-style parliamentary republic with a weak president. The crisis generated by the French bombardment of Algerian rebel positions inside Tunisia in 1958 interrupted plenary discussions in the assembly, providing Bourguiba with the necessary time to consolidate his power and shape an answer to the crucial constitutional question—that of the relationship between the executive powers of the president and the legislative powers of the new National Assembly. When the Constitution was finally promulgated on June 1, 1959, its most striking feature was the strong position accorded the president of the republic, an office that critics charged had been tailored expressly for Bourguiba (see Constitutional Development, ch. 4).

In spite of its many links with the West, independent Tunisia was fundamentally nonaligned in its foreign policy. Tunisia attached great importance to its membership in the United Nations. Although it sought to increase economic cooperation in the Maghrib and was a member of the League of Arab States (Arab League), the Bourguiba regime was intensely suspicious of appeals

for Arab unity and avoided close identification with regional blocs. After independence Tunisia retained its closest ties with France (see Foreign Relations, ch. 4).

Relations with France

More than 3,000 French officials remained behind in Tunisia to assist in the transition to independence. More French nationals were sent to give technical assistance and to staff schools and medical facilities. The French armed forces retained bases in Tunisia, and the status of French-owned businesses and property remained unchanged.

Despite his working relationship with France, Bourguiba simultaneously lent his support to Algerian nationalists whose war of liberation against France had broken out only a few months after Tunisia was granted its independence. The Algerian government-in-exile had its headquarters in Tunis, and about 25,000 Algerian rebel troops were based in sanctuaries inside Tunisia. Tens of thousands of Algerian refugees fled to Tunisia to escape the war. In 1957 France halted economic assistance and arms deliveries to Tunisia, and the French army constructed a heavily patrolled system of electrified barbed-wire fences—known as the Morice Line—along the Algerian border with Tunisia to discourage infiltration from the Tunisian sanctuaries.

In February 1958 French aircraft bombed the small Tunisian border town of Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf, which the Algerians reportedly used as a fire base. The popular reaction to the incident among Tunisians was intense, and French troops in Tunisia were confined to their bases. Tensions were eased a few months later, after de Gaulle came to power in France, and the two governments agreed in June that French troops would be withdrawn gradually from all areas, except the base at Bizerte.

For a time French-Tunisian relations ran smoothly, despite the continuing war in Algeria. In 1959 the customs union between the two countries was abolished, but Tunisia was allowed preferential tariffs and remained in the Franc Zone. Tunisia also pursued associated status in the European Economic Community (EEC, also known as the Common Market) with French backing. Over the objections of the Algerian nationalists, Tunisia allowed a French-owned pipeline to be constructed across the country to carry Algerian oil. In early 1961 Bourguiba met with de Gaulle at Rambouillet to discuss a variety of topics, including Algeria and the status of Bizerte.

As French-Algerian negotiations moved toward acceptance of Algerian independence, however, Bourguiba apparently became concerned that Tunisia would be charged with softness for having allowed French forces to remain on its territory during the hostilities. He took the occasion of a French move to extend the runways of the military airfield at Bizerte to call for complete French withdrawal and mounted popular demonstrations throughout the country to echo his demand. A number of French nationals were

arrested. Then, in July 1961, Tunisian irregulars attacked the base at Bizerte and fired on French aircraft. Reinforcements were flown in, and the French launched a counterattack that threw back the Tunisians, leaving more than 1,000 of them dead. In the meantime, Tunisian "volunteers" had moved against the French post at Garet al Hamel in the Sahara, fifteen kilometers south of Tunisia's extreme southern limits, intending to extend the country's claims in that region.

The French-Tunisian dispute was submitted to a special session of the United Nations General Assembly, which in August adopted a resolution recognizing Tunisia's right to demand the French withdrawal from Bizerte and called on France and Tunisia to enter immediately into negotiations. France refused to participate in the General Assembly debate; however, late in 1962 talks began on all outstanding questions troubling relations between the two countries. The atmosphere was eased by a voluntary French undertaking, completed in October 1963, to evacuate Bizerte. Negotiations led to an agreement permitted the takeover of French-owned land with compensation from Tunisia and a guarantee for the protection of French citizens resident in Tunisia and of French investments there. France, in turn, consented to a large loan to finance Tunisian development.

Unexpectedly, however, on the next anniversary of the Bardo Treaty (May 12, 1964), Bourguiba, standing before the table on which that treaty had been signed in 1881, announced that henceforward lands usable for farming could be held only by physical persons (i.e., not companies or corporations) of Tunisian nationality. This new law affected approximately 275,000 hectares owned by French nationals, including much of the best land in the country, which was nationalized without indemnity, and set off an exodus of Europeans, more than half of whom had been born in Tunisia. The French government reacted promptly by canceling the development loan, suspending technical assistance, and subjecting Tunisian imports to strict quotas. Only gradually were relations normalized and close French-Tunisian ties restored.

Destourian Socialism

The Bizerte incident caused some within the party to question Bourguiba's judgment. Party executives closest to the president attempted to give reasoned explanations for his actions and appealed for greater understanding from the public. When a plot to assassinate Bourguiba was uncovered in 1962, official blame was cast on dissatisfied elements within the party. Open discussion was still tolerated among party members, but the Neo-Destour's enthusiasm and its influence as a mass movement seemed to be declining. Popular support for government programs was grounded on Bourguiba's immense personal prestige rather than on his guidance of the party.

At this point economic factors helped set the stage for new reforms. Economic sluggishness had convinced the government of

the need for long-term planning and development, but further centralization inimical to landowning and business interests within the party required countervailing action to solidify overall consensus behind the plan. Attempts to foster open discussion on the proposed reform measures failed in the backlash of the Bizerte crisis. With a deft sense of timing President Bourguiba announced in March 1963 a series of reforms to open the dialogue between the leadership and local branches. The party congress that was convened in 1964 to ratify the reforms and discuss the economic proposals was termed the Congress of Destiny because of the major steps to be taken. After open discussion both the reforms and the plan were unanimously endorsed. In a significant step the congress renamed the party the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD) and officially conferred the title of "Destourian socialism" on a platform that sought to reconcile Bourguiba's political ethics with a program calling for economic planning and collectivism (see Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism, ch. 4).

The government had initiated a cooperative agricultural movement, using former *habus* land, as early as 1956. The program was enlarged to include communal property sequestered by the government and, in 1964, to include confiscated foreign-owned land. Individual Tunisian farmers, mostly smallholders, had also been allowed to buy land put up for sale by the government; but as more privately held property was drawn into the public sector, it was clear that priority had been given to developing a cooperative system that was touted as representing a return to the old tradition of communal ownership. By 1968 production had declined sharply in the public sector, in part as a result of unrealistic planning and incompetent management but largely because of the noncooperation of Tunisian farmers, who were usually passive in giving up their land to the cooperatives but who refused to take part in them.

In the meantime the image of Destourian socialism was blemished by the abrupt resignation in 1968 of Ahmed Mestiri, Bourguiba's secretary of state for defense. Mestiri, who had held a series of important cabinet, diplomatic, and party posts, was at the time considered one of the most promising of a new generation of leaders, together with Ben Salah and Mohamed Masmoudi, and was a member of the party's governing Political Bureau. Although carefully grounding his withdrawal on the methods by which current policies were applied rather than their substance, Mestiri suggested that the party was not sufficiently true to its own principles. After his resignation he was expelled from the party.

Early in 1969 all privately held land was seized and made part of the cooperative system, a move heralded officially as a major stride in the march toward Destourian socialism. At the same time all commercial establishments were cooperativized. In theory cooperative enterprises were worker operated, but in practice

management was centralized in a bureaucracy in Tunis that was out of touch with sentiment in the countryside. Decisions were made on the basis of political requirements rather than economic feasibility or a knowledge of the areas that they affected. Production fell off dramatically, a failure compounded by a disastrous harvest. During the summer bloodshed was reported in the Sahil where farmers resisted confiscation of their land for the cooperatives. When it finally awoke to the extent of opposition to the cooperatives, the government suddenly reversed its policy. In September Ben Salah, the secretary of state responsible for the cooperative program, was sacked. A new liberal economic policy was announced that intended to encourage individual initiative. Tunisia was still officially described as having a mixed economy but with emphasis placed on private enterprise. While the cooperative system remained in operation, *habus* land was allowed to revert to the benefactor, and businesses were returned to their original owners. The government also catered to foreign investment with liberal tax benefits (see Foreign Investment, ch. 3).

Problem Areas

During the 1960s optimistic observers saw Tunisia as the most stable country in the Maghrib. It had the most firmly established middle-class tradition of any Muslim country and had been largely spared the rancor of class conflict and tribal rivalry. Its government provided excellent education and good medical facilities. There was no starvation in Tunisia and few of the suburban slums that mar most North African cities. Although its economy was not yet fully developed, Tunisia was not an underdeveloped country; and it had succeeded in making the most of its resources in oil, natural gas, phosphates, rich farmland, and plentiful sunshine for tourism.

The sharp and often surprising readjustments in policy that were characteristic of the Bourguiba regime in the late 1960s and 1970s were a particular embarrassment to a younger generation of Tunisians who also resented the stifling of opposition within the single-party system and were frustrated by the refusal of an older generation of politicians to make room at the top for more dynamic leadership. Domestic critics described Tunisia as a country without politics in which Bourguiba had been institutionalized as a national symbol invoked by the bureaucratic elite to legitimize their monopoly of power. Critics also pointed to the uneven distribution of the new wealth generated in the early 1970s.

Two problem areas on which government attention focused were education and employment. In the late 1970s Tunisia, with 60 percent of its population under the age of thirty, earmarked nearly one-third of its national budget for education (as compared with less than 10 percent for defense). But the government nonetheless had difficulty in relating the extraordinary productivity of its educational system to the economy's capacity to absorb it. Despite economic growth, Tunisia continued to suffer from the

problem of chronic unemployment and underemployment, which was mitigated only by the migration of workers to France and Libya. Labor and student unrest, resulting in bloodshed in January 1978, was attributed by the government to extremist elements bent on rebellion. Most observers, however, saw it as a demonstration of growing rivalry between the government and organized labor.

Already elected to four successive terms as president of the republic, Bourguiba became president for life in March 1975 after a constitutional revision adopted by the National Assembly. On that occasion Tunisia's Supreme Combatant demonstrated his consciousness of the unique position that he filled in his country's history when he told the legislators meeting at the Carthage Palace:

> Abilities as great as Bourguiba's are not found around every corner. They are a miracle of nature that occur rarely in history. . . . The act of making me head of state for life can only be seen as homage to the man whose name is identified with Tunisia, and by which it is recognized among nations. He deserves the merit for pulling the country out of oblivion and transforming it into a respected state.

* * *

The history of Tunisia can be profitably studied, particularly for the preprotectorate period, as part of the general history of the Maghrib as a whole. Abdallah Laroui's *The History of the Maghrib* is a critical interpretive work that can be recommended to readers with some background in the history of the region. Jamil M. Abun-Nasr's *A History of the Maghrib* is to date the only narrative survey of Maghribi history from earliest times to the present available in English.

Charles-André Julien's *History of North Africa*, edited and extensively revised by Roger Le Tourneau, provides the clearest scholarly survey of Tunisian history up to about 1830. Julien's *L'Afrique du Nord en marche* brings the coverage up to independence. For a treatment of the late medieval period, see Robert Brunschvig's *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides des origines à la fin du XV siècle*. Much material of value for an understanding of the early Ottoman period is found in Fernand Braudel's *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Lucette Valensi's *On the Eve of Colonialism* tries to demonstrate that the Maghrib possessed viable political institutions that were disrupted by French intervention. Leon Carl Brown's *The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 1837–1855* views the period during which Tunisia made its initial attempt to come to grips with the influence of the West. For a study of the intellectual conflict posed by the French presence, see David C. Gordon's *North Africa's French Legacy*. Jacques Berque's *French North Africa: The Maghreb Between the Two Wars* is the seminal work of a brilliant social historian.

With a few exceptions, Tunisian historiography ends with the founding of the Neo-Destour Party in 1934. After that date schol-

arship in Tunisia has been preempted for political uses. Access to archival material is restricted, and interpretation is limited in the schools and publications to an officially received version. In consequence the post-1934 era is not widely dealt with by academics at higher levels of study, and Tunisian historians have contented themselves with the examination of earlier periods. Bourguiba's cult of personality has obscured the contributions of other nationalists. Little work has been done, for instance, or is possible under current conditions on the dynamics of the Neo-Destour movement, especially the activity of the Political Bureau and party cells during the years when Bourguiba was in prison or absent from the country. Given these restrictions, the most satisfactory Tunisian studies of the nationalist movement are Salah-Eddine Tlatli's *Tunisie nouvelle* and Paul Sebag's useful Marxist critique, *La Tunisie*.

Tunisia was a popular area for research by American historians, political scientists, economists, and sociologists who in the 1960s saw it as an example of a single-party state that was successfully modernizing its political and economic institutions by means of an indigenous brand of socialism. Unfortunately, these scholars have not updated their research to take into account the failure of the socialist experiment in Tunisia, and most have moved on to other areas of research. As a result there was in 1978 no adequate revision of the history of the 1960s or analysis of developments in the 1970s.

Recommended surveys of Tunisian history and postprotectorate politics include Dwight L. Ling's brief *Tunisia from Protectorate to Republic*, Clement Henry Moore's *Tunisia since Independence*, Wilfrid Knapp's *Tunisia*, and André Raymond's *La Tunisie*, all of which are dated. (For further information see Bibliography.)

Chapter 2. Society and its Environment

Quranic scripture

TUNISIA HAS BEEN a focus of trade and colonization almost since the beginning of recorded time. Its people are ethnically a mixture of Arab and indigenous Berber stock, but succeeding waves of Carthaginians, Romans, Spanish Muslims from Andalusia, Ottoman Turks, and—most recently—French and Italian settlers have had a profound effect on Tunisia's culture, social structure, and values. Tunisia is the most cosmopolitan and the most self-aware of the North African countries. When the French protectorate commenced in 1881, Tunisia had long been a unified state possessing all the institutions of a viable society, and present-day nationalists see the country's own brand of nationalism as growing out of the soundness of its own traditions, fortified by the assimilation of what it could derive from French culture.

Habib Bourguiba, the country's first and only president, assumed that office in 1957 with the announced intention of bringing about social modernization within the framework of Islam, the national religion. Postindependence history has in large part been a chronicle of progress achieved in this endeavor, and the progress has been considerable. In particular, the status of women has been raised sharply. The traditional extended family has largely given way to the modern nuclear family, and family and personal legal matters are determined under Tunisia's own legal code, which has replaced traditional Islamic law in these respects.

School enrollments have soared, and modern health and welfare programs have been initiated. Much of what has occurred has been opposed by conservatives and religious traditionalists, but it is seen by the new elite as an adaptation of Islam to modern imperatives rather than as a denial of Islam.

In the late 1970s modernization had yet to penetrate the more remote parts of the countryside, where farmers and a few nomadic communities continued to live in a relatively traditional social environment. But in the cities modernization had progressed so far that there were signs of reaction against it.

Geography

Tunisia juts into the Mediterranean Sea midway between Gibraltar and Suez at the point where the narrows between Cape Bon and Sicily divide the Mediterranean into eastern and western basins. As a consequence of this strategic location, the country has since classical times been an important crossroads between Europe and the Middle East.

Together with Algeria, Morocco, and the northwestern portion of Libya known historically as Tripolitania, Tunisia makes up the Maghrib (see Glossary), a region in which fertile coastal lands give way to the great Atlas mountain chain of North Africa and, finally, to the interior expanses of the Sahara Desert. The countries share a common history, ethnic composition, culture, and language and

are therefore compared to one another with considerable frequency.

Tunisia has an area of approximately 164,000 square kilometers and a coastline of about 1,600 kilometers indented by the gulfs of Tunis, Al Hammamat, and Gabes. It has six major and nearly a dozen minor seaports.

The Atlas mountain system, which begins in southwestern Morocco, terminates in northeastern Tunisia. Most of northern Tunisia is mountainous, but elevations average less than 300 meters and rarely exceed 1,000 meters. The Atlas mountains in Algeria and Morocco, however, reach much higher elevations.

The principal mountain chain, the Dorsale, slants northeastward across the country and plunges into the sea at Cape Bon, an area famed among early Mediterranean navigators. The Dorsale is cut by several transverse depressions, among them the Al Qasrayn (Kasserine) Pass, which figured significantly in the battle for Tunisia during World War II.

Geographic Regions

Tunisia can be divided into three major geographic regions, determined in part by topography and quality of the soils and in particular by the incidence of rainfall, which decreases progressively from north to south. The regions are northern, central, and southern Tunisia (see fig. 7).

The Dorsale mountains form a rain-shadow separating northern Tunisia from the remainder of the country. Rainfall tends to be heavier north of this mountain barrier, soils to be richer, and the countryside to be more heavily populated.

Northern Tunisia is a generally mountainous region and is sometimes referred to as the Tell, a term peculiar to North Africa. It is generally defined as a heavily populated area of high ground located close to the Mediterranean Sea. The region is bisected from east to west by the Majardah River and is divided into subregions made up of the Majardah Valley and the several portions of the Tell. Rising in the mountains of eastern Algeria, the Majardah River flows eastward and discharges into the Gulf of Tunis. Its valley contains Tunisia's best farmland.

Comprising less than one-fourth of the national territory, northern Tunisia is a generally prosperous region. It was heavily settled and exploited by the French, and its physical characteristics resemble those of southern Europe more than those of North Africa.

South of the Dorsale lies central Tunisia, a region of generally poor soils and scanty rainfall. Its interior consists of a predominantly pastoral area made up of the High Steppes and the Low Steppes, the former occurring at greater elevations near the Algerian border. The term *steppes* was used by the French to define the semiarid interior highlands of North Africa, and the area has little other than its name in common with the better known steppes of Central Asia.

The steppe subregions of central Tunisia have scanty natural

Figure 7. Geographical Regions and Subregions

vegetation and are used for pasturage and the marginal cultivation of cereals. Eastward the Low Steppes give way to a littoral known as the Sahil, an Arabic term meaning coast or shore. Rainfall is not appreciably heavier there, but heavy dew has made possible the intensive cultivation of olives and other tree crops, and there is considerable cereal production. The Sahil is customarily regarded as including the Jarbah and Qarqannah islands in the Gulf of Gabes. The former has been heavily populated since antiquity.

Although natural features and climate make the Sahil part of central Tunisia, it is much more akin socially to the city of Tunis and the fertile and heavily populated coastal zone of northern Tunisia than to the barren steppes of the interior. The Sahil and portions of northern Tunisia combine to make up the economic, political, and cultural heartland of the country.

Southward from the steppes, the arid expanses that make up southern Tunisia commence with an area where elevations are lower and where the landscape is marked by numerous chotts (salt marshes, sometimes seen as *shatts*) that lie below sea level. On higher grounds around these depressions are various oasis settlements and valuable groves of date palms. Farther to the south, the land rises to form the plateaus, tablelands, and occasional eroded hills that make up the Tunisian portion of the Sahara Desert. Fringed by lagoons and salt flats, the narrow gravelly coast of this region formed the traditional access route to the Maghrib from the east. The coast is sparsely settled, and the interior is almost totally empty except for a few nomads and inhabitants of oases that occur along a line of springs at the foot of an interior escarpment.

Climate and Hydrology

The most significant natural features that influence the climate are the Mediterranean, which moderates climate conditions; the Atlas mountains; and the Sahara Desert with its hot and dry sirocco winds, which blow northward over much of the country. A Mediterranean climate is characteristic of the northern coastal zone. Temperatures are higher in the interior and the south. Seasonal changes are moderate, although humidity increases in winter. In the desert, enormous diurnal changes are registered, the thermometer plummeting after dusk. Even in the coldest winter months the freezing point is reached only at high elevations in the interior. Winter nights are damp and chilly, however. Tunis is at about the same latitude as San Francisco and its more expensive new homes are being built with central heating.

Most of the precipitation occurs during the rainy season, between December and March. Tunisia is generally less favored than the other Maghribi countries with respect to rainfall, and agriculture is heavily dependent on irregular climatic conditions. In central Tunisia in particular, droughts are frequent, and a two-month-long drought means the loss of 30 to 50 percent of the crops. In the north, in contrast, the Majardah River is subject to frequent flooding. Rainfall decreases from north to south, ranging

from 1,000 to 1,500 millimeters annually in the northwest highlands near the Algerian frontier to less than 100 millimeters in the southern portion of the Sahara zone. The 400-millimeter and 200-millimeter rainfall lines extend between east and west, roughly corresponding to the northern and southern limits of central Tunisia, respectively.

The Majardah River is the country's only major perennial stream. Other watercourses are seasonal, and the volume of flow even of the Majardah in June and July is less than one-twelfth of that in February, thus minimizing the river's potential as a source of hydroelectric power.

In the central Tunisian steppes, occasional watercourses flow southward out of the Dorsale after heavy rains but evaporate in salt flats without reaching tidewater. The Shatt al Jarid, the largest of southern Tunisia's salt lakes, is dry during half of the year but is flooded to form a shallow salt lake during the winter months. Even intermittent streams are rare in the Sahara Desert, but rich artesian sources make possible numerous well-fed oases. In a large part of the region slightly brackish but usable water from enormous aquifers can be brought to the surface, but at prohibitive cost.

In 1977 only about 130,000 hectares of the more than 3 million under cultivation were irrigated. Although a limited number of new irrigation schemes were in progress or were planned, dryland farming will probably continue to predominate by a wide margin.

Vegetation

True Mediterranean vegetation is found only in northern Tunisia, where the mountains were once abundantly forested, principally in cork oak and pine. Cork production, tree felling for firewood and charcoal, and clearing of land for agriculture have severely depleted the reserve, however, and have brought about widespread erosion. The nationwide forest reserve amounted to only 750,000 hectares in 1964.

There is no continuous ground cover in central Tunisia. Esparto grass grows on the steppes and is harvested and exported for paper and cordage manufacture, and there are occasinal jujube trees, members of the blackthorn family. Poor forests of pine and helm oak are found on the approaches to the Dorsale mountains, and red juniper grows at higher elevations elsewhere in the region. In the Sahil almost all of the land has been cleared.

Southern Tunisia is largely devoid of vegetation, except where date palms and planted crops grow around oases. Saharan species, such as acacia and saltbush, enter the natural pattern, however, and at higher levels of the Sahara Desert occasional patches of scrub grass provide meager food for camels.

Population

Census statistics for 1975 show the population had reached nearly 5.6 million, over 1 million more than the 4.5 million registered in 1966 (see table 2, Appendix). There were 102 males per 100 females as compared with about 104 males per 100 females in 1966—a pattern characteristic of developing countries in which improving health conditions are reducing maternal mortality, where birth-related maternal deaths in earlier years had taken a heavy toll, and where social customs may also have contributed to excessive female mortality.

The population in 1975 was a young one in which 43.8 percent was under the age of fifteen, 52.1 percent was between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five, and only 4.1 percent was aged sixty-five and over. The large proportion of people too young to earn a living placed a burden on those in the economically active age bracket, but the proportion was slightly lower than it had been in 1966 and lower than in populations elsewhere in North Africa.

The actual rate of growth in population between 1966 and 1975 was approximately 2.3 percent annually (see table 3, Appendix). Each year a substantial number of Tunisians had gone abroad to France and other countries in search of employment, however, and the natural rate of population growth (births minus deaths) was 2.6 percent. Even this rate was somewhat below the world average, estimated at 2.9 percent for 1977, and the rate in Tunisia was beginning to turn downward under the influence of an effective government-supported family planning program (see Family Planning, this ch.).

The natural rate of increase had edged upward with improved conditions of health and nutrition, a downward trend in fertility having been more than offset by a sharply declining rate of mortality (see Living Conditions, this ch.).

During recent years Tunisia has experienced a substantial annual population loss through emigration. The largest number consisted of European residents leaving the country after independence. The census figures show that the number of foreign residents declined from over 241,000 in 1956 to fewer than 67,000 in 1966.

Most of the outflow to Europe has been to France, substantial numbers going also to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the Netherlands. Large numbers have also gone to neighboring Libya to seek employment in the oil fields. Because many or most of the migrants to Libya travel without documentation, the actual number in that country is not known. During the first eight months of 1972, for example, 43,000 illegal migrants were reported to have been returned to Tunisia. An undocumented migration to Italy, in particular to Sicily, has also been reported.

The flow of migrants has slackened since the early 1970s, as changing economic conditions have reduced the demand for labor

from abroad, but in early 1978 a Paris journal estimated the number of migrant workers and dependents at 316,000, including 183,000 in France and 69,000 in Libya. Only 1,500 Tunisians were reported to have been admitted to France in 1977, however, an indication that the number of expatriate workers might be on the decline.

Most of the country's cities and its densest rural populations are in the northeastern coastal lowlands and the Sahil. This zone, comprising less than 20 percent of the country's territory, contained over one-half of its inhabitants in 1975.

The remainder of the country is often referred to generally as the "interior." It is for the most part rural and scantily populated. A single exception is the governorate of Al Qayrawan, which in 1975 was one of the most heavily populated. Its ancient capital city was established in the seventh century A.D. as an armed camp and transport center, and it early became an important center of Muslim culture (see Islam and the Arabs, ch. 1).

The prevailing pattern of rural settlement varies by region, although in all parts of the country most of the sedentary population lives in nuclear villages rather than on isolated farms. The landscape of northern Tunisia is one of a few large, mechanized farms, operated either collectively or individually, and many small ones. The big farms, most of them former properties of the European colonists, are found in the lower Majardah Valley and in the coastal lowlands. The rest of the region is made up of mountainous terrain where small farm villages are scattered on the mountainsides and in the valleys.

In the steppes of central Tunisia the scanty population makes a meager livelihood from seminomadic livestock culture and some farming. Alfalfa is grown, and cereal cultivation in rotation with fallow is practiced on the better soils at lower elevations. The Sahil consists of closely arrayed farm villages given over to olive growing and other tree culture. The farms were already so heavily concentrated at the beginning of the protectorate period that the French and Italian colonists found little land available for the taking.

The bulk of the population of southern Tunisia is clustered in the palm-grove oases surrounding the salt lakes in the pre-Saharan zone. In the Sahara Desert few populated oases are scattered in the Zahr mountains, southeast of Qabis. The Sahara is the land of the nomads, but during the 1960s and the 1970s overgrazing of the scanty sources of pasturage, declining demand for camels, and declining trade opportunities had progressively reduced nomadism. At the same time the government has encouraged the settling of nomads on artificial oases in a process that begins with the sinking of a well and takes shape through erecting fences and planting date palms or crops. The process of cultivation, however, has remained repugnant to many nomads, and some have chosen the alternative of urban migration.

Urban residents made up 47.5 percent of the national population in 1975 as compared with 40 percent in 1966 and 30 percent in 1956. Urban localities are generally defined as administrative communes with populations of 2,000 or more inhabitants. Growth of the cities and towns has quickened during the years since independence with the increasing migration of country people. Between 1966 and 1975 the urban population sector increased annually at a rate of about 4.2 percent as compared with 0.5 percent in the countryside. Some localities in central and southern Tunisia experienced actual losses in population.

Poverty, underemployment at home, and glittering hopes of job prospects in the cities have motivated the migrants. The government has sought to counter the flow and achieve a better regional population balance by initiating various schemes for improving rural living standards, but the efforts undertaken seem to have had little impact on the countryman's decision to join the urban migratory movement.

Some migration takes place between rural localities, most frequently from a depressed agricultural zone in the interior to a more prosperous one in the coastal area. Most of the movement, however, has led into the cities and towns. A majority of the migrants have been young men traveling alone; all but a few return from time to time to their villages of origin, and many marry local girls. Ultimately they may return permanently to their villages or relocate their families in their new urban homes.

The pattern of urban settlement is one of a few cities and a great many large and small towns. Only Tunis has more than 500,000 inhabitants, and in 1975 only four other cities had populations exceeding 50,000; Safaqis, Susah, Bizerte, and Al Qayrawan, in descending order. There were fifty-six cities with populations of between 10,000 and 50,000, however, and eighty with from 1,000 to 10,000.

The metropolitan zone of the city of Tunis extends far beyond the limits of the city itself. The governorate of Tunis, in which the city is located, had nearly 1 million inhabitants in 1975, and over 90 percent of these were urban dwellers.

Tunis has the best schools and the only really good hospitals. In the late 1970s the country's best-trained government and private-sector workers resided in it, and its factories contributed one-half of the national industrial output. Even the prosperous Sahil had contributed its share of migrants to Tunis.

Tunis is an ancient city, and it had served almost continuously as the capital of the political entity that preceded modern Tunisia. The site of ancient Carthage is today a suburb of Tunis, and Roman ruins in the area are a reminder that this was a capital of Roman North Africa (see Early History, ch. 1). The fact that Tunis has served as a capital city far longer than have the capitals of other Maghrib states is believed to have contributed to the greater sense of nationhood characteristic of the Tunisian people.

Courtesy International Labour Office

Traditional and modern means of transportation

Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

The pattern of settlement in present-day Tunis is an uneven one. In the mid-1970s it was estimated that one-third of the population was crammed into the medina, the oldest part of the city. One-third resided in correspondingly crowded *gourbivilles,* the squatter settlements of urban migrants scattered around the urban periphery, and the remaining one-third lived for the most part in the spacious *ville nouvelle,* the new city built by the French colonists.

In the *gourbivilles* the original earthen huts from which the settlements derive their name are added to and improved until they acquire an air of some comfort and prosperity (see Housing, this ch.). At this stage of development, the housing that they provide is generally superior to that in the medina, where spatial limitations are causing crowding to become progressively more severe. Many people, however, consider residence in the medina to be a step upward on the social scale from the *gourbivilles,* for in it they are able to feel more integrated in urban life. *Gourbiville* and medina residents alike, however, feel a step above the people left behind in the countryside.

Ethnic Groups

The modern-day Tunisians are a mixture of Berber and Arab stock. Berbers, the indigenous people of North Africa, were designated in classical times by the general term *barberoi,* the barbarians existing outside the framework of Greco-Roman civilization. Of stocky physique and with a high incidence of light hair and blue eyes, the Berbers are a Caucasian people believed to have come from the east, but their actual place of origin is unknown.

The Arab component of the society was introduced during the conquests of the seventh and eleventh centuries A.D. At no time did the people from the Arabian Peninsula number more than 10 percent of the population, but the indigenous inhabitants quickly accepted the religion, the language, and the customs of the invaders. Before the end of the Middle Ages the arabization of the Tunisian Berbers was nearly complete.

In this, Tunisia contrasts with other North African countries where in the 1970s people still ethnically identifiable as Berbers made up substantial minorities of the populations. The completeness as well as the early date of the arabization of the Tunisian Berbers may have been in part because most of the Berbers occupied a relatively compact geographical area. But it may also have been because long before the coming of the Arabs the Berbers had experienced a degree of assimilation under the Carthaginians and the Romans.

In the 1970s small Berber communities could still be found on the island of Jarbah, in a few Sahara Desert oases, and in the mountainous northwestern corner of the country. They represented less than 2 percent of the total population, however, and only about one-half of this proportion had retained the Berber language of pre-Arab Tunisia.

Since the end of the Arab invasions there has been little change in the ethnic composition of the population. Black Africans, once widely used as household slaves and concubines, have affected the composition of the population only slightly, although somewhat darker skins are occasionally found in the southern oases. Darker skin is not an indication of low social status in Tunisia, however; some aristocratic lineages acknowledge black ancestry.

The Tunisian population was swelled during the fifteenth century by Muslims uprooted by the Spanish from southern Spain. Intermarriage between Tunisians and Balkan, Greek, and Turkish people as well as Christian Europeans during the period of the French protectorate had important social and economic impact, although it did little to alter the ethnic composition of the society.

During the years of the protectorate the population had included a large number of Europeans, French and Italians predominating. At the beginning the Italians had been the more numerous, but the French took first place after about 1930; in 1956 the European colony consisted of about 180,000 French, 60,000 Italians, and a scattering of others. The two groups were socioeconomically different, for the French had constituted a well-to-do elite, and the bulk of the Italians had been working-class people from southern Italy and Sicily. The French landowners had occupied only one-tenth of the cultivable lands, but these lands had produced 95 percent of the wine, 40 percent of the cereal crops, and more than 30 percent of the cash farm income.

During the first two years after independence about one-half of the Europeans departed, but their departure was less hurried than that from Morocco and Algeria. For a time the new government continued to employ more than 3,000 former French officials and a great many schoolteachers, and the replacement of French bureaucrats and business leaders was generally orderly. By 1966, however, the census showed that the population included only 66,384 foreigners, of whom only 32,520 were not Arabs.

In the late 1970s the small and predominantly French foreign colony continued to exist amicably with the Tunisians. Tunisians do not go out of their way to praise the French, but they readily acknowledge that their country might not have been able to achieve its generally recognized position of the most advanced among the new African nations without the French heritage.

At the time of independence about 58,000 Jews lived in Tunisia. They were organized in rabbinical communities, spoke Arabic, and were engaged chiefly as traders and craftsmen. Their upper classes had become highly Europeanized. About one-half of their number were Tunisian citizens, but the European emigration was accompanied by a similar Jewish outflow to Israel, France, and other countries. All but 16,000 had departed by 1966, and in the late 1970s the few thousand remaining Jews were located mainly in Tunis and on the island of Jarbah, where they formed the remnant of an ancient Sephardic Jewish community. Anti-Jewish feeling

took expression in riots in Tunis on the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967 and resulted in the partial destruction of the principal synagogue in Tunis. On the occasion of the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, however, President Bourguiba promised publicly that no Jew would be harmed.

Social Structure and Values

Throughout North Africa the population originally was made up of tribes, the basic unit of social organization for both Berbers and Arabs. In the 1970s a considerable number of tribes were still to be found in rural parts of Algeria and Morocco, but in Tunisia they had all but disappeared. The foreign influences that had made Tunisian society a cosmopolitan one at an early date had operated also to break down tribal organization, and under the French administration a deliberate and at least partially successful effort was made to bring the primarily nomadic tribal people into the mainstream of national life. Tribal sheikhs were made civil servants, and tribesmen were encouraged or coerced into becoming sedentary farmers.

Soon after independence the remaining tribal lands were nationalized. In the 1970s a few tribes and remnants of tribes were still to be found in the more remote central and southern parts of the country, and tribal traits continued to survive in many localities; but the tribal system, as a significant element in the Tunisian social complex, had given way to more modern forms of organization.

Traditional Social Groups

Under the Turkish regency and later under the French protectorate, traditional Muslim society evolved as a class hierarchy consisting of four elements. At the top were the *baldi*, the urban aristocracy; other town dwellers were the *tunsi*. The *afaqi* were sedentary rural villagers, and the *arabi* were the nomadic and seminomadic people of central and southern tunisia, some of them still organized in tribes. These traditional class distinctions have become increasingly blurred, only the *baldi* exhibiting significant class consciousness after independence. Important remnants of all four remained, however, either as elements of newer social groups or as centers of resistance to modernization.

Sometimes referred to as the traditional aristocracy or as the old upper class, the *baldi* traced their ancestry to the Prophet Muhammad or to one of his important followers and regarded themselves as the guardians of Islamic civilization. They rarely married outsiders, although for several centuries particularly wealthy commercial families strengthened the *baldi* ranks through arranged marriages.

Children of the *baldi* received a strict religious education culminating in studies at the old Zituna University (now the Faculty of Theology and Religious Science at the University of Tunis). The prestige of the *baldi* was based in large part on their administering

the *habus* (the numerous large agricultural estates held in trust for religious and charitable works) and other religious charities and the mosques and their holding positions in the Islamic court system. Thus the domain of the *baldi* extended far beyond the agricultural properties and commercial establishments they owned individually.

The *baldi* families were related to and closely associated with the ulama, the religious scholars and notables who elsewhere in the Maghrib formed an important elite element of traditional society. The ulama played a much less significant role in Tunis, however, where in addition to being conservative and intellectually uninspired they tended to be servile in their dealings with the French administrators. They were of some significance in a negative fashion—for example, in combating improvement in the status of women.

Since independence the ulama have disappeared from view as an identifiable social element, and the loss of *baldi* wealth and influence has severely restricted the role of that group. The post-independence nationalization of *habus* land, the reduction in the size of the estates, and the general modernization of society have combined to force the *baldi* to give way to a new elite.

Seldom heard since independence, the term *tunsi* was formerly applied to all town dwellers other than the elite. Wealthy as well as poor and educated as well as illiterate, the *tunsi* represented an extremely fluid element in urban society, where much upward mobility could be attained. The *tunsi* also represented a channel of interaction between town and countryside, and the group's relatively open and liberal social values made it natural for the better educated and wealthier among its ranks to associate and sometimes ally with the Europeans.

Vestiges of the *tunsi* are still to be found in the traditional Muslim residential quarters of the cities and among traditional occupations, such as those of artisans, bakers, and butchers. With the flow of migration that commenced in the 1930s they have given way to other social groups, but the *tunsi* contributed many leaders to the independence movement.

Afaqi, or sedentary villagers, had their archetype in the prosperous farmers of the Sahil. Looked down on by the *tunsi* as well as by the *baldi* for their social aggressiveness and lack of sophistication, they were highly industrious, thrifty, and forward looking. Few Europeans took up residence in the already heavily populated Sahil, but it was the *afaqi* from this subregion who showed the greatest adaptability to Western values and institutions. Many were prosperous peasant proprietors able to send their children to French schools, and these young people played a leading role in the developing nationalist movement early in the twentieth century. Later a disproportionately large number of postindependence party leaders and civil servants were *afaqi* of Sahilian origin.

The populations of the relatively underdeveloped interior of the country were generally described as the *arabi*. Newly arrived but still unassimilated migrants to the cities as well as nomads and seminomadic villagers, these people occupied the lowest rung of the social ladder. Their customs and life-styles, however, were too diverse for them to have developed a sense of belonging to a society larger than that of their own village or nomadic tribe.

The term *arabi* is now seldom heard. A corresponding lower social element, however, continues to possess many of the characteristics of the *arabi*. In the countryside much of the population still lives by subsistence farming outside the mainstream of national life. In the cities and towns newly arrived migrants continue to be identified with their villages of origin rather than with their new homes.

The first sociopolitical nationalist group was the Young Tunisians, an idealistic association of young men who achieved prominence for a short time at the beginning of the twentieth century. This group—like the Destour Party, which was formed in 1920—drew its leadership largely from the self-contained *baldi*.

The old Destour Party collapsed largely because of its failure to find a sufficiently wide social base. It ignored the growth of an urban intelligentsia and a wage-earning urban working class. In addition, it was virtually unaware of the changes in rural society brought about by the settling of the nomads and the advent of capitalist agriculture. Thus, from the beginning, the party had allied itself with a social element already on the decline. It was replaced by the Neo-Destour Party in 1934, when that organization was able to attract support from other developing social elements.

Social Stratification in Modern Tunisia

According to one estimate, only one-third of the population at independence was clearly in the modern sector, which could be found almost entirely in the cities and larger towns and in the Sahil. Another one-third was transitional, moving out of the traditional stage and consisting principally of urban migrants and the children of migrants. The remaining one-third, including most of the rural population of central and southern Tunisia, remained almost untouched by the modernizing social and economic forces that were changing the rest of society.

Status in modern Tunisia is based on education and excellence in performance in a preferred occupation rather than on family origins. Four new social groups can be distinguished. The first is the nationalist Western-educated elite who have captured political leadership. The second is a heterogeneous collection of middle- and lower-class people found in the coastal cities and towns. The third is the largely unskilled and heavily unemployed urban slum dwellers, for the most part recently arrived from the countryside. The last is the prosperous modern farming sector in the Sahil and the northeastern coastal area.

Members of the new elite are linked by common values and experiences, and education serves as the principal common denominator. In the late 1970s the University of Tunis, which had been founded only in 1960, was just beginning to contribute substantial numbers of this group. Most of its members had a French university background, although a few had only a secondary school education or were products of the traditional Zituna University. A preponderant majority had attended the prestigious Sadiki College, which in the years before independence had managed with considerable success to synthesize Arabic and French culture.

For the most part Western educated, the new elite admire Western institutions and values and have a special attachment to French culture and life-styles. Having adapted themselves quickly to Western customs and ways of dressing, they stand out from the rest of the population, still rooted in varying degrees to old-fashioned clothing and customs. For the most part strongly committed to rapid modernization and an egalitarian national society, they are united in their rejection of the old social order.

In the final stage before independence the new elite resembled neither the aristocratic Young Tunisians nor the conservative old Destour Party members. Rather, they were predominantly people of modest origin who had become modern and westernized.

Some were urban-born professionals, the sons of the bourgeoisie, but a disproportionately large number came from the Sahil, where emphasis had always been placed on individuality and merit rather than on social class. President Bourguiba himself is perhaps the ideal example of a Sahilian of poor but respectable origin who achieved prominence through ability, education (provided by the Sadiki College and university studies abroad), intense patriotism, and adroit political activity.

In the 1970s the elite consisted of a core of 10,000 to 15,000; with the inclusion of middle-class administrators, teachers, and businessmen, it could be considered to number a little more than 100,000. New university graduates were adding to its number at a rate of perhaps 2,000 a year, but the total membership remained less than 2 percent of the population.

At the top of the elite structure were the leaders of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD), bound together by old student-day friendships, by intricate political ties, and to some extent by marriage. They had studied in France and, speaking French fluently, tended to look down on those not familiar with the French language and customs.

In the years just before independence the new elite consisted of young men for the most part in their thirties who were liberals devoted to changing the society. In the late 1970s these men were in their fifties or older and were established in their positions of leadership. The classes graduating from the University of Tunis were forming a still newer elite whose members had not attended

The city of Tunis
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

French schools and who were less imbued with dedication to the idea of modernization as an almost holy cause.

The middle level of society that has developed since independence has both urban and rural componenets. It is predominantly urban, however, and includes middle- and lower grade civil servants; members of the labor unions; such self-employed individuals as taxi drivers, shopkeepers, and tailors; and the more substantial wage earners. In Tunis, in particular, they often are migrants recently uprooted from their customary surroundings who retain strong ties with their villages of origin and who do not identify with the traditional town dwellers. However, they look up to the westernized elite, whose life-styles they seek to emulate. The most upwardly mobile of the Tunisian population, these people have high aspirations for their children and take positive views toward social issues such as the emancipation of women.

At the lowest level of urban life are the residents of the *gourbivilles* around Tunis and, to a lesser extent, around other major urban centers. These migrants, usually from the poorest rural areas, have many characteristics in common with the middle-level newcomers but differ from them in their general lack of education and skills. A disproportionately large number are unemployed or employed at marginal service occupations.

The younger men return to the countryside to marry; thus only second or third generation working-class migrants come to think of themselves as townspeople. Upward mobility is not easy, but occasionally an entire migrant group is successful in establishing itself in a particular occupation that lifts it into the middle level of society. This process occurred, for example, when migrants from the island of Jarbah were generally successful in establishing themselves as grocers.

The independent farmers of the Sahil and the northeastern coastal lowlands form the nucleus of an emerging rural middle class. For the rest of the rural population, socioeconomic changes that commenced during the protectorate years have somewhat disrupted the traditional pattern of life without replacing it with a clearly identifiable new pattern. Education, health care, and welfare services are spreading throughout the countryside, but the more capable and ambitious of the rural people have been more likely to migrate to Tunis than to provide leadership in bringing about social development in the rural setting.

In the Tunisian countryside the farm villages and towns are often quite large, and a large part of their population does not engage in farming. There are civil administrators, storekeepers, and individuals providing a variety of services. In more prosperous parts of the country the largest of these villages are cities in miniature and have gained population by accepting migrants from the poorer areas. They differ from the smaller traditional villages in encompassing an emerging wage-earning class within which a sense of common identity is developing. Accordingly, kinship ties

are being progressively subordinated to occupational ones as bases for social cohesion. Farmers and entrepreneurs who regularly employ wage labor and the pool of workers who earn wages from agriculture, construction, and a few other activities form socially distinct groups. They reside in different parts of the village and, in the larger villages and towns, frequent different cafés. The shopkeepers and service workers do not fit readily into either employer or worker category; they tend to look down on the wage laborers and envy and emulate the entrepreneurial class.

Change in the rural social and economic structures began during the protectorate period when the French established large agricultural settlements in northern Tunisia. The result was a displacement of the small sedentary farmers and seminomads and their reduction in status to landless peasants. Some became agricultural workers on the French estates, while others migrated to the cities. The progressive absorption of small farms and the former seasonal pasturage resulted in a new kind of migrant farm population in which people moved about the country as seasonal farm workers.

In areas of heavy farm settlement, such as those along the coast and in the Majardah Valley, new European-style towns including urban complexes of stores, schools, and places of worship came into being. The Muslim population shared little in these, but the example of French living patterns established in them hurried a decline in traditional organizations and values.

In 1956 nearly one-half of the farmers worked plots of less then five hectares, but 5 percent of the farmers held 50 percent of the land. The nationalization of the *habus* lands and the repurchase by the government of some of the former French estates resulted in some redistribution of the land, but landless workers and small agriculturists made up two-thirds of the agricultural population and accounted for less than one-third of the income generated by the agricultural sector during the early years of independence.

During these first years after independence rural land redistribution and organized resettlement schemes played a significant role in bringing about social changes in areas where the Europeans had farmed most of the best land. The breakup of pastureland farther south, held collectively by nomadic people, had also been an important factor in the disintegration of the traditional social structure. Change was slowest in the desert lands of southern Tunisia where a small dominant class controlled the water supply. There was almost no opportunity for social mobility in oasis society, and the oases increasingly became areas of out-migration in which only women, the old, and the very young remained at home.

Beginning in 1964 the government widened its program of land reform by nationalizing the remaining European-owned farms and expanding the number of agricultural cooperatives. By 1969 as many as 90 percent of the farms had been organized in coopera-

tives. These were privately owned but were operated cooperatively, and the profits were distributed by the cooperatives' managers.

The peasantry (other than the prosperous proprietors of the Sahil) had enjoyed no effective political or economic power before independence, and pressure for land reform had for the most part come from urban middle-class activists rather than from country people themselves. Few peasants had seemed concerned about removing the French landlords, and the agricultural cooperatives were established from the outside as an all-encompassing experiment in egalitarian social enterprise.

Poor planning and poorer management by too many badly trained administrators and managers gave rise to much disaffection. Equally important, there was considerable stratification within the rural population, and the prosperous small landowners found themselves socially as well as monetarily discomfited by being forced into a classless cooperative venture.

The end came in 1969 when participating farmers were told that they would be permitted to withdraw their holdings from the communal program. A few cooperative farm complexes remained in existence, but a large majority of the farmers chose to return to individual operation. By 1970 the area of state control was reduced to not much more than the 600,000 hectares purchased or confiscated from foreigners.

To be a small farmer or farm laborer was sometimes to wonder where the promised benefits of independence had gone. Real income had remained static, and the gap in status between the urban and rural population had widened. More than ever, urban migration seemed an attractive recourse. Notwithstanding the high levels of unemployment in its slum areas, Tunis seemed to be a particularly attractive destination, as it was the principal center of wealth and social mobility.

The government and its political instrument, the PSD, are significant catalysts of social change, bringing about social reform through concerted action programs. Some—like the agricultural land reform and rural cooperative movement of the 1960s—have been failures, but the notably successful political mobilization of rural people through the mechanism of local party organizations has increased personal awareness and individual participation in the national society by rural as well as urban inhabitants. One of the great accomplishments of the PSD has been its establishment of branches, or cells, along rational geographic and sometimes even tribal lines; in 1974 there were about 1,400 branches.

Few Arab political systems have been able to bring about social change without weakening the fabric of social and human relationships. The relative success of the Tunisians in this respect can reasonably be attributed to a sense of the pragmatic so strong that it is difficult to read an evaluation of postindependence Tunisia without encountering the word *pragmatism* at least once. A 1975

article in a French journal summed it up by headlining: "Bourguibism is essentially the art of the possible."

Social Values

Islam is at the root of the traditional system of values. Man's power to influence his destiny or environment is believed to be nonexistent or limited, and the harshness and unreliability of the climate in most of the Muslim world have strengthened this belief among nomadic tribesmen. Even among sedentary people, pestilence and other misfortunes are believed to be the will of God.

To be respected a man must, above all, be a good Muslim. He must publicly profess his faith, pray at established times, and give alms. The strong resistance encountered by President Bourguiba when he moved to discourage fasting during the sacred month of Ramadan bore witness to the surviving strength of traditional religious values in modern-day Tunisia.

Islamic morality places a high value on sincerity in speech, and a Tunisian proverb holds that a liar is worse than a thief. The Quran describes hypocrisy as a "sickness of the soul" that isolates man from God as well as from his community. Gentility is highly valued, and agressiveness must be avoided where possible.

Because it is God's will, poverty carries no stigma. A man in need can expect assistance from community as well as kin, and the old and disabled are automatically cared for in the traditional society. Too great a show of independence or the hoarding of wealth is viewed with suspicion and disapproval. The accumulation of wealth is not spurned, but neither does it rank high on the scale of values, and usury is forbidden. A cooperative spirit is more important than wealth, and in traditional urban culture the pursuit of scholarly activities is more highly valued than wealth and status.

The highest place in the Arab's traditional scale of values is occupied by the perfection of man's relationship with God. As a result, women are subordinate to men, not because of an ideology of woman's inferiority but rather because of the belief that she represents a threat to man's relationship with God (see The Individual, the Family, and the Sexes, this ch.).

In Tunisia the values of city people, the residents of Tunis in particular, differed traditionally from those prevailing in the countryside, and the values in the progressive towns and villages of the Sahil had more in common with those of Tunis than with those of the change-resistant lands of the interior. City people stressed intellectual and political acumen, competitive success, and wealth. Peasants and nomads, on the other hand, were traditionally suspicious of city values.

At an early date Tunisia became divided into two cultural regions, and the distinction between these two can still be readily observed. They consist roughly of the cities and the coastal rural zone, including the Sahil, on the one hand and of the rural interior on the other. The differences between these two regions corre-

spond generally to the historical division between settled life and nomadism; and their roots go back to pre-Arab times when Berbers settled in the ancient cities under the suzerainty of Carthaginians or Romans.

In the more remote localities, values associated with tribal life have tended to survive. The people of nomadic tribes were highly individualistic, and tribal and family loyalties were considered values of the highest order. Tribal raids and counter-raids were frequent. Tribal warfare was suppressed by the French, and over the years a majority of the nomads either became sedentary farmers or migrated to the cities. Values associated with tribal organization have proved persistent, however, and probably contributed to the strong resistance encountered by the government in its efforts to aid landless farmers and to introduce modern farming techniques.

The primordial acceptance of man's helplessness and complete dependence on God has since early times been considerably modified in the cities and the coastal plains. In the Sahil, in particular, town and village life have been marked by a considerable sense of security, right to property, and material progress; and a typically middle-class value system developed at an early date. The Sahil has been referred to as the axis upon which the modern, integrated nation developed.

The progressive middle-class elements of Tunis, mainly shopkeepers and government functionaries, are made up in large part of migrants from the Sahil. Working-class people are mainly migrants of the interior, who display a consistently less favorable view toward change from the traditional pattern with respect to such matters as religious taboos and the status of women. Similarly, the old *baldi* aristocracy of Tunis has continued to display a conservative front and to resist all efforts toward modernization and the reform of traditional Islamic practices.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contact between Tunisia and the Western world increasingly brought modernizing influences, but their full impact came to bear only with the establishment of a large European community and the opening up of opportunities in French universities for significant numbers of Tunisian youth, who had attended the already prestigious Sadiki College in Tunis. The emergence of this new elite left the old social hierarchy badly shaken and had an important influence on the spread of modern values. In part because of its middle-class background and in part because of its intense nationalism, the new elite lent its wholehearted support to the modernization of society, thus creating an atmosphere of mobility that encouraged many of the less educated and less privileged to adopt the new way of thinking.

The new values were secular ones, justified not in terms of religious precepts and traditional values but in terms of natural law and rationalism that assume the probability of material and social

progress to an extent that appears to contradict the traditional Islamic acceptance of man's situation as not susceptible to change. However, there remains a strong emotional attachment to Islam, based on a stressing of the cultural rather than the strictly dogmatic aspect of the religion.

Modern Tunisians tend to be goal oriented, seeking for themselves and their society objectives related to an improved standard of living and judging each other and their leaders by the degree of success achieved in pursuit of these goals. Performance and individual merit in the new scale of values replace the ascriptive ones of traditional society, which assign social status based on family lineage and distribute social privileges on the basis of birth. Modern social values are thus egalitarian in nature and correspond to political values emphasizing the equality of all citizens under the law and popular participation in the government.

Modern values and their reflection of higher expectations make parents highly ambitious for their children. Those still on the fringes of modern society are anxious for their children to become civil servants or teachers—the only modern occupations with which they are familiar. Those better integrated in modern society wish their children to enter a profession or, perhaps, to become a minister in the government. Education is regarded as the key to achievement of aspirations, and the government's phenomenal success in expanding and improving the educational system during the 1950s and 1960s made it possible for young people of the 1970s to entertain high educational and occupational goals (see Education, this ch.). High aspirations are the product of the government's encouraging a massive transformation in attitudes and values by creating a shared commitment to modernization. A 1970 survey of the children of several thousand families in Tunis, most of them members of the working class, found that 65 percent of the boys and 40 percent of the girls looked forward to a university education and finding career employment before reaching the age of twenty-five. A majority of these expected their careers to fall in one of the professions, and most of the others anticipated white-collar employment.

The first years after independence were ones of relative economic stagnation in which capital investment was low and few new industries were started. The tempo of economic development subsequently quickened; but during the first years enormous efforts were made to transform attitudes and values and to reduce psychological and social impediments to progress; and investments in human resources, such as new schools and hospitals, far outstripped investment in capital goods.

The Individual, the Family, and the Sexes

Personal status and interpersonal relations in Tunisian society were dictated traditionally by the precepts of the Quran and the sharia, the Islamic system of law. The Muslim system is a generally stern one, but in Tunisia from an early date it was modified

somewhat by relatively liberal attitudes and by a sense of national identity that long predated independence. With the attainment of independence in 1956, moreover, President Bourguiba and the political elite who supported him undertook to bring Tunisian society fully into the modern world, and the chief instrument in this respect was the Code of Personal Status, enacted only three months later.

Commonly known as the Majalla, the Code of Personal Status stands as a landmark in Tunisian legislation and possibly as the most remarkable code of conduct ever enacted in a Muslim country. Because it profoundly altered the legal bases for family matters and the status of women, it received strenuous opposition from conservative Islamic elements, but the new educated elite gave it their unqualified support.

Moreover, the opposition of the conservative elements was anticipated by the drafters of the code, and the thrust of opposition was blunted by careful retention of traditional Islamic concepts where it was feared that their rejection might arouse too much opposition. Similarly, certain modernizing precepts were not contained in the original code but were added later as amendments.

The code was presented not as a rejection of Islamic teaching but as Islam in modern dress. Moreover, it was offered as something for all Tunisian people, regardless of religion. Previously, the sharia courts had applied only to Muslims; Jews had their own rabbinical courts, and Tunisians who were neither Muslim nor Jewish had been governed by the French Civil Code.

Conservative opposition to the Tunisian Code of Personal Status gradually abated, and by the late 1970s its provisions were generally accepted in the cities. Implementation was still far from complete in the more remote parts of the countryside, where the new system was least understood and where attachment to traditional ways was the strongest. But in Tunisian society in general it was being accepted and was considered a success.

Family and Household

Throughout the Arab world the traditional social unit has been the extended, patrilineal family headed by a father and including his wife or wives, their unmarried and married sons with their families, and their unmarried daughters. This family unit consists of a dozen or more members, and they reside in a single house or in adjoining dwellings with a common courtyard. Property is held in common by the family, which acts as an economic unit, the men working together in joint ventures; all expenditures are defrayed from the common fund.

In Tunisia, however, the early intrusion of Western customs and values in the cities has led to the gradual displacement of the extended family group by the nuclear family, consisting only of the spouses and their children. The extended family has persisted with greater tenacity in the rural interior of the country, but the

policy of the government since independence has been to encourage the nuclear form of family organization at the expense of the extended family.

The 1966 population census indicated that the average family consisted of only slightly more than five members, and fewer than 10 percent of the families included relatives other than spouses and children. Daughters-in-law were not individually counted, but fewer than 1.5 percent of family members were listed as grandchildren. Moreoever, the census showed that more than 10 percent of the family heads were women, an arrangement that would have been unheard of in traditional Muslim society.

The decline of the extended family, however, has not necessarily meant the corresponding decline of all values and practices associated with it. For example, postindependence studies have found that endogamous marriage (between close relatives) continues to be common. In one survey about 90 percent of the marriages in a seminomadic community and 60 percent of those among Tunis factory workers were endogamous. In addition, urban working-class neighborhoods were traditionally organized on the basis of kinship, and recent urban migrants have sought to preserve this pattern to the extent that housing shortages permit. Indeed, such a tie often represents the only secure social factor available to them in the highly complex and competitive urban environment.

Although the father no longer exercises absolute authority over his children, he is still regarded as the household head, and the relationship between father and son remains a peculiarly important internal family tie. Reserve and formality mark the relationship of the son with his parent, who remains an authoritarian figure.

Greater informality and an almost conspiratorial friendship traditionally marked the relationship between mother and daughter in the extended family, and something of this spirit survives. The mother was traditionally responsible for the care and supervision of sons until they reached the age of about six. A warm relationship developed, but all discipline remained the responsibility of the father, who assumed supervision of older male children.

The years since independence have seen considerable modification of the old pattern of family relationships, although parents continue to encourage sons far more than daughters to develop modern ideas and aspirations. In part, the change in relationships within the family is the consequence of a widening gap separating the educated and forward-looking children from their often less educated parents. Postindependence surveys of student attitudes, however, have shown most young people to be at ease in family surroundings and generally satisfied with their upbringing. There have been no indications of serious conflict within the family, although students interviewed felt that they would give their own

children an upbringing quite different from that which they had received. Thus, there is an apparent tendency to reject parental guidance on the theoretical but not on the personal level.

Children commence their education at home as early as the age of four. Rural daughters help their mothers with household duties, and sons work in the fields and olive groves. Tasks become more difficult as the children grow older, so that youngsters of twelve and thirteen are virtually fully prepared for adult work. It is more difficult for sons to assist their fathers when they live in towns, and prominent families even consider this practice inappropriate. The sons, therefore, learn a trade or continue school. Moreover, education for daughters is increasingly favored, particularly in urban areas. As a result, most girls attend school for at least a few years before marriage.

After independence the guardianship of children was clarified and formalized within the legal system. Under a 1956 law women were considered to be the best guardians for younger children. A listing of preferred relatives for legal guardianship was also established. In 1959 the law was modified to permit the court to appoint the person most qualified. If the father is not appointed guardian, guardianship by the mother or a relative lasts until a boy is seven and a girl nine. The father remains responsible for his children's education and may, upon termination of the mother's guardianship, take the children into his home.

In addition to performing its normal domestic functions, the household frequently serves as a business and labor unit. In villages and oases the household is a cooperative work unit in which animals and land are distributed to and managed by household members. In towns many small businesses, especially those of craftsmen, are family enterprises in which the son is trained by his father and eventually takes over the business from him, a system reminiscent of the traditional guilds of artisans in which membership was handed down from father to son.

By outlawing polygamy and bringing divorces into the courts, the Code of Personal Status struck directly at the traditional patriarchal family system, which accorded to the husband the unrestricted right to take up to four wives, whom he could divorce at will by repudiation—the traditional Muslim practice whereby the husband could rid himself of an unwanted spouse by saying "I divorce thee" three times before witnesses. When repudiated, the wife was required to abandon her children and return to the authority of her father's household. The code abolished polygyny and gave to wives rights corresponding to those of husbands in seeking court-ordered divorces. The act of marriage became legally a voluntary one rather than the traditional agreement between families.

The legal age for marriage was set by the code at fifteen years for females and eighteen years for males, but a 1964 amendment raised the ages to seventeen and twenty, respectively. This

amendment, which effectively outlawed child marriage, serves as an example of the cautious and gradual mannner in which the government's planners sought modernization. A 1970 survey showed the the actual marriage rates were considerably over the minimums—23.1 years as an average for both sexes in Tunis, and slightly over twenty years in Qabis, the governorate registering the youngest average.

Men and Women

Sociability is regarded as a virtue, and men who live alone may become the object of suspicion, derision, or pity. Men believe it is important to be cordial in interpersonal relationships and to observe carefully the forms of polite behavior that make up the complex system of Muslim etiquette. For a woman to live alone was traditionally out of the question. The pattern of life called for her to remain under the parental roof until her marriage and after marriage to be a part of her husband's household, sometimes in seclusion.

The most reliable basis for trust between men was traditionally considered to be kinship; and the ties of friendship, no matter how strong, remained inferior to blood ties. This kinship value, common throughout the Muslim world, is an ancient one that probably harks back to the time of tribal existence when all members of the tribe bore a real or ascribed relationship to one another, or at least to a time when all or most of the residents of a village or quarter were related.

Since independence the preference of kinship ties has abated somewhat among men but remains powerful among women. In one late 1960s survey 40 percent of the men but only 17 percent of the women interviewed named an individual not a biological relative as one with whom confidences were exchanged with regard to personal problems. Even among educated city dwellers, however, the drawing of a distinction between relatives and friends has led to the survival of behavior patterns sometimes difficult for Westerners to understand. Men are unlikely to bring their wives to social functions that include business associates, and they are even less likely to discuss their families or family life with outsiders.

The traditional Muslim cultural pattern, which countenanced polygyny and permitted the maintenance of an unrestricted number of concubines, has had the inescapable side effect of placing a high value on masculine virility. Women were traditionally restricted to the home and in all ways required to play a subordinate role. The husband held a position of unquestioned authority and moderated all family quarrels. In his absence, authority was delegated not to the wife but to the eldest or to the best educated son.

The subordinate nature of the status of women was spelled out in the sharia, although not in the Quran. The status of women, however, has always been somewhat higher in Tunisia than in most Muslim countries, and with the enactment of the Code of Personal Status their civil status became almost equal to that of

men with respect to such matters as inheritance, ownership of property, custody of children, and divorce. The code did not treat specifically the matter of infidelity, but a 1968 amendment to the Penal Code provided a maximum of five years' imprisonment for either a husband or a wife found guilty of adultery.

As early as 1930 a leading intellectual named Tahar Haddad published *Our Women and Sharia in Society,* a strongly worded polemic on the rights of women. It appeared before its time and was severely criticized, but women's rights and the emancipation of women attracted progressively greater support during the succeeding years, and in 1956 the National Union of Tunisian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes—UNFT) was founded with the support of the Neo-Destour Party to defend the civil and personal rights of women. The organization has prospered in terms of membership growth and has provided a useful forum for voicing female aspirations yet to be achieved. It received a setback in 1974, however, when a former UNFT president was dismissed for embezzling public funds (see Interest Groups, ch. 4).

Enactment of the Code of Personal Status could not, of itself and overnight, achieve full emancipation for women in all parts of the country. By 1971 there were eighty-three women town councillors in the town halls, and four women deputies sat in the National Assembly. The gulf in status between urban and rural women was wide, however, and even in cities women were somewhat reluctant to experiment with their newly achieved liberty. For example, veils were still sometimes worn (see Food and Clothing, this ch.).

During the years since independence parents have continued to encourage sons far more than daughters to develop modern attitudes and aspirations, but school attendance has had a much more profound modernizing effect on girls than on their brothers. It has provided the primary, and sometimes sole, opportunity to develop friendships outside the home and to achieve new self-concepts and aspirations. By the late 1970s girls made up nearly one-half of the students in primary schools; and, although male students continued to predominate at higher levels, a 1975 study of the Maghribi countries pointed out that in Tunisia one-fourth of the university students were girls, whereas they represented hardly one-tenth elsewhere in the Maghrib. In the late 1970s planners estimated that at least 30 percent of the girls leaving school were candidates for the job market.

The prejudice against employment of unmarried women had largely abated, but nearly all continued to live with their parents, who imposed a degree of constraint on their social emancipation. Feelings were mixed about the employment of married women, for what remained of the traditional Islamic prejudice against female employment was reinforced by a feeling of lost prestige on the part of husbands. However, when the wife was able to bring

home enough money to contribute substantially to the family income, a husband was less likely to raise objections.

Statistics concerning the employment of women are incomplete and somewhat misleading, because more than 70 percent of all female workers are usually shown as engaged in farming. A large majority of these are wives and daughters helping out in the fields on an irregular basis and receiving no pay for their labor. This is traditional employment and is sometimes excluded from labor-force statistics. Thus, limited significance is attached to data showing female employment at 396,000 or one-fourth of the labor force in 1976. Of greater significance are figures for nonagricultural employment of females in 1972 (see table 4, Appendix). Other sources indicate that in the mid-1970s there were over 4,000 female school teachers, several thousand female office workers, and a scattering of women in professional fields, such as law, medicine, and pharmacy. Until a few years before independence nonagricultural female employment had been virtually confined to handicrafts and personal services.

Family Planning

Before independence Tunisia did not have a family planning program. The Quran contains no injunction against birth control, but tradition-directed families, in particular, felt that having large families was in keeping with God's will. Perhaps more important, in families with limited income, numerous children were considered important for the work they could perform in assisting their parents and as assurances of security for their parents' old age. In a survey of selected Arab countries in 1965, Tunisia ranked at about the average in crude birthrate. Arab countries regularly rank among the highest in the world.

Soon after independence, however, the new government determined that if Tunisia were to be brought into the modern world, a modern posture toward population control had to be adopted. Birth control was legalized in 1961, and in 1964 the government commenced family planning studies with the assistance of several foreign agencies. In 1973 the government provided centralized leadership for already well-established planning activities by establishing the National Office of Family Planning and Research as a semiautonomous agency of the Ministry of Health.

During the years since independence a progressive decline in the birthrate has been as much the consequence of such factors as improved education, urbanization, and a rising per capita income as of acceptance of family planning practices. As recently as 1976 only about 17 percent of the women of childbearing age were reported using contraceptives, but the proportion had jumped from 1973 when acceptance was only 8.5 percent.

Religious Life

With the exception of a scattering of Europeans and Jews, all inhabitants of Tunisia profess Islam and belong to the orthodox

Sunni sect. The only non-Sunni Muslims in Tunisia are found on the island of Jarbah, where about one-half of the population maintains austere Kharidjite beliefs.

Islam

In A.D. 610 Muhammad, a merchant of the Arabian town of Mecca and later known as the Prophet, began to preach the first of a series of revelations granted him by God through the Angel Gabriel. Muhammad denounced the polytheistic paganism of his fellow Meccans, his vigorous and continuing censure eventually earning him their bitter enmity. In 622 he and a group of his followers fled to Yathrib, which came to be known as Medina (the city). The flight, or hijra, known in the West as the Hegira, marked the beginning of the Islamic era. In Medina he continued to preach, eventually defeated his detractors in battle, and consolidated both the temporal and the spiritual leadership of all Arabia in his person before his death in 632.

After Muhammad's death his followers compiled those of his words regarded as coming directly from God into the Quran, the hold scripture of Islam. Some of his other sayings and teachings as well as the precedents of his personal behavior, as recalled by those who had known him during life, became the Hadith. Together they form a comprehensive guide to the spiritual, ethical, and social life of the Muslim.

Islam was rapidly transformed from a small religious community into a dynamic political and military force. By the seventh century Muslim conquerors had reached North Africa, where by the twelfth century the orthodox Sunni denomination had become firmly established. The Berbers had been substantially islamized as early as the eighth century but had brought to Islam a genial sense of paganism that has frustrated every effort to eradicate it. Nevertheless today's Berber-speakers are often acutely aware that they are the presumed descendants of people who were not original Muslim communicants, an omission on the part of their ancestors that makes them particularly zealous of their display of piety.

There is no Muslim clergy. However, the ulama that teaches religious law and dogma, the *muaddhin* who issues calls to prayer, and a considerable number of other functionaries guide the faithful in the pursuit of their religious obligations.

The *shahada* (testimony) states the central belief of Islam: "There is no God but God (Allah), and Muhammad is his Prophet." Allah is the Arabic word for "God" rather than a particular name: Muhammad denied the existence of the myriad minor gods and spirits previously worshiped and declared the omnipotence of the unique creator, God. Islam means "submission to the will of God," and he who submits is a Muslim. Muhammad's revelation is said to complete for all time the series of revelations received by the Jews and the Christians. God himself is believed to have remained the same throughout time, and Abraham, Moses, and Jesus are recognized as inspired vehicles of God's will; but Islam reveres as

sacred only God's message, rejecting Christianity's deification of the messenger. It accepts the concepts of guardian angels, the Day of Judgment, general resurrection, heaven and hell, and the eternal life of the soul.

The duties of the Muslim form the five pillars of the faith: recitation of the *shahada; salat,* daily prayer; *zakat,* almsgiving; *sawm,* fasting; and hajj, pilgrimage. The believer prays in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions at dawn, midday, midafternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Prescribed genuflections and prostrations accompany the prayers, which the worshiper recites facing toward Mecca. Whenever possible men pray in congregation at the mosque, and on Fridays they are obliged to do so. Women may worship at the mosque, where they are segregated from the men, although more frequently they pray at home.

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, is the time of obligatory fasting in commemoration of Muhammad's receipt of the Quran. During this period all but the sick and certain others are enjoined from eating, drinking, smoking, or sexual intercourse during the daylight hours; and the pace of industry and commerce slows. Since the months of the lunar calendar revolve through the solar year, Ramadan falls at various seasons in different years.

All Muslims should make the hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca to participate in special rites held at several spots there during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. The pilgrim, dressed in the white seamless ihram, abstains from sexual relations, shaving, haircutting, and nail paring. On returning he is entitled the honorific "al Haj" before his name.

In addition to specific duties, Islam imposes a code of ethical conduct encouraging generosity, fairness, honesty, and respect and forbidding adultery, gambling, usury, and the consumption of carrion, blood, pork, and alcohol. The eating of pork was forbidden at a time when desert dwellers were particularly likely to fall ill as a consequence of eating improperly preserved or cooked meat.

The Prophet enjoined his followers to convert the infidel to the true faith but specifically exempted the "people of the book"—Jews and Christians—whose religions he recognized as the historical basis of Islam. These peoples were to be permitted to continue their own communal and religious life so long as they recognized the temporal domain of Muslim authorities, paid their taxes, and did not proselytize or otherwise interfere with the practice of Islam.

Folk Beliefs

Although Islam preaches the unique majesty and sanctity of God and the equality of all believers before him, a heterodox North African view has for centuries entailed a belief in the coalescence of special spiritual powers in particular human beings. This special power is known as *baraka,* a transferable quality of personal

blessedness and spiritual force said to reside in certain individuals.

The human being to whom God granted the most powerful *baraka* is said to have been Muhammad. Its possession was also ascribed, however, to holy men or saints known as marabouts, whose claims to the possession of *baraka* could be substantiated through performance of apparent miracles, exemplary spiritual insight, or genealogical connection with a recognized earlier possessor of *baraka*.

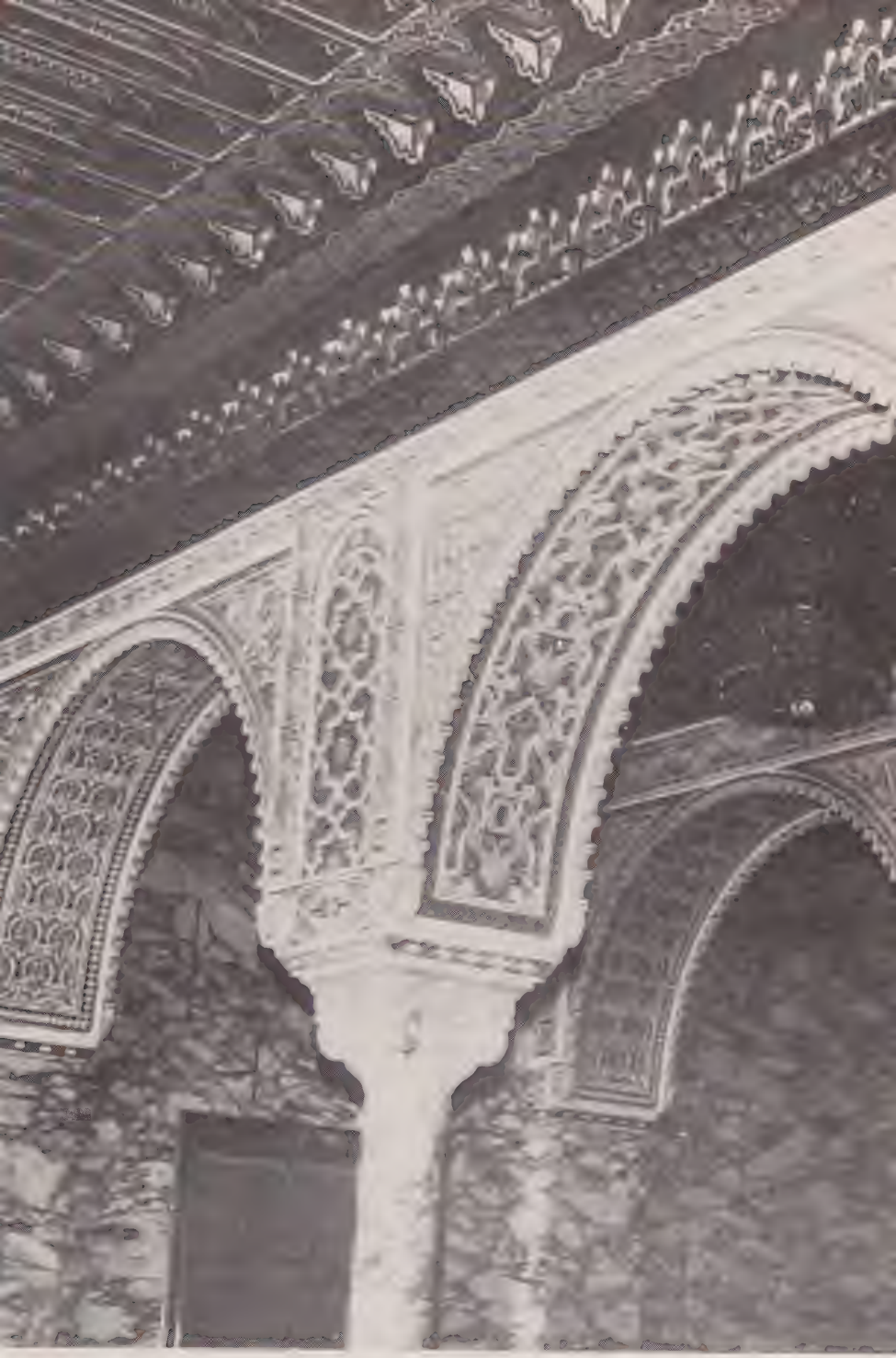
Tunisian marabouts at one time were highly influential, particularly in the countryside, but in the postindependence period they continued to function only in a few of the more remote localities in the central and southern parts of the country. Previously, however, their religious prestige made them useful as arbiters of disputes between families or tribal groups. They built centers, called *zawayiate* (sing., *zawayia*), that combined the functions of school, living quarters for the marabouts, and—ultimately—the tombs of the holy men.

Although the French government was tolerant toward the marabouts, their religious role was never approved by the regular religious authorities during the colonial period, and the government of independent Tunisia has been unsympathetic toward them. In at least one instance a *zawayia* has been taken over as a headquarters for the local branch of the PSD.

Marabouts were the most frequent, though by no means the only, founders of brotherhoods, religious fraternities in which membership was formerly widespread. The members of each group followed a common discipline called the *tariqah* (path) in the pursuit of further closeness to God. The teachings of the founder were carried on by his disciples after his death, and the brotherhoods achieved considerable political and social prominence.

The influential Mahdiyah brotherhood, apparently the newest, was not established until 1930, but the brotherhood system had commenced to decline even before independence and, like the system of marabouts, was not encouraged by the postindependence government. Although some of the brotherhoods still exist, members are less loyal to them than in the past. Workmen who belong to both a brotherhood and a labor union, for instance, now attach greater importance to the union.

A few folk beliefs and customs persist in modern Tunisia, particularly among the poor and in the more remote parts of the countryside. Some of these concern evil spirits called djinns, which frequently take the guise of animals such as snakes; wearing verses from the Quran on an amulet is believed to provide protection against these creatures. The evil eye is widely feared, but according to belief it can be warded off by holding out the fingers of the right hand. Certain stones are believed to have magic proper-



Carved columns and arabesques
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

ties; a bloodstone, for example, is considered useful in preventing toothache.

Folk beliefs are dying out with the spread of public education and the general modernization of society. They remained widespread enough at the time of independence, however, for President Bourguiba to devote part of an important speech to denouncing belief in the evil eye, avoidance of the numbers ten and fifteen, and the custom of tossing bits of meat into dark corners to placate the djinns. Tunisians were urged by Bourguiba to discard these outmoded ideas, which were unworthy of a monotheistic religion such as Islam.

Religion and Society

Islam has a distinguished history in Tunisia. The city of Al Qayrawan, founded in the seventh century as a military camp, became the holiest of the North African Islamic cities, and seven pilgrimages to it became regarded as the equivalent of one to Mecca. The preamble of the Tunisian Constitution opens with the passage "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful" and proclaims that the Tunisian people are resolved "to remain faithful to the teachings of Islam." Article I states that the official religion of Tunisia is Islam.

Although Islam is the state religion, Tunisians have always been tolerant of other religious followings, and in the 1970s the small European Christian community and the few remaining Jews lived amicably among the Muslim majority (see Ethnic Groups, this ch.). Moreover, on assuming the presidency in 1957, Bourguiba offended many orthodox Muslims when he became the first Arab leader to undertake such heterodox measures as abolishing polygyny and introducing birth control and mass education.

The changes that have affected traditional Muslim beliefs have been brought about by the westernized and forward-looking elite, but they were not immediately welcomed by the large proportion of the population that was still tradition oriented. The government has continued to evoke traditional religion as a matter of policy, however, and President Bourguiba has been quoted as stating that he is defending Islam and the Islamic character of Tunisian society by modern means.

The government policy toward Islam has been an immensely realistic one. Religious schooling at the secondary level is obligatory, but the government has made it clear that stress is to be placed on opening Arab-Islamic culture to the currents of contemporary humanism. Prayer, according to a 1964 statement by President Bourguiba, should make people accustomed to community life and develop in them a sense of national unity. The gestures of official respect for Islam are in harmony with the strong emotional attachment most people feel for their religion and reflect the prudent gradualism of the program of reform. The prevailing policy has frequently been one of compromise and of

reshaping and adapting existing institutions rather than of frontal attack.

The public attitude toward Islam is one of identifying it with government goals. In 1968 the important Arab-language journal *Al Fikr* devoted its entire June issue to the topic of "Islam in our epoch" and observed that Tunisian socialism was actually an extension of the Hadith, the sayings of Muhammad that supplement the Quran, and that in Tunisia Islam has been mobilized in support of social change. Several years later a leading Tunis newspaper noted that the sweeping out of the institutions and proscriptions of classical Islam did not mean that the religion had lost its vitality but that it was being humanized.

What some observers see as a kind of religious renaissance since about 1970 can be cited in the activities of the Society for the Preservation of the Quran. Its branches have existed in every city and in most of the larger towns for many years, but after 1970 its membership grew and became much more active. It continued to appeal most to the elderly, but it also attracted a growing number of younger people who felt that their education had not given them enough concerning their spiritual heritage.

Society has been able to bring some pressure on the government to give more attention to teaching the fundamentals of Islam in the schools and to emphasizing understanding rather than simply memorizing the Quran. The distinction is an important one, for the instruction in the religious schools of the protectorate era had been largely devoted to rote memorization.

On the one hand, modernist opponents of the society believe that its leaders seek to rescind the new secular laws, which often contradict the literal Quranic proscriptions. On the other hand, its supporters deny that they are attempting to bring down the new secular laws, admitting only that they are seeking "a more Muslim society."

Language and Society

Arabic is spoken by virtually the entire population. Berber, the indigenous tongue, is spoken elsewhere in North Africa as a principal language by substantial minorities of the population, but in Tunisia it is the principal language of not more than 1 percent of the people. Most of these are old people or the inhabitants of three remote villages in the Sahara where the Berber language and customs retain their vitality. French is spoken as a second language by nearly one-half of the population, and many French-educated Tunisians find themselves more at ease with French than with Arabic.

The apparent simplicity of the pattern of language usage disappears when it is realized that Arabic, as it is spoken in Tunisia, is not a single identifiable language but rather a complex of different forms and dialects. At the summit is classical Arabic, the language of the Quran and high literature. It is seldom spoken except in a religious connection, although public figures sometimes make use

of it for elevated rhetoric. A knowledge of it is considered a mark of erudition and discrimination. More frequently used is a modern form known as literary or intermediate Arabic. It is used in the schools and by the media and is actually an elevated level of the spoken vernacular.

The popular dialects that make up the vernacular occur in bewildering variety and in many instances defy syntax and grammar. They vary from village to village, although for the most part they are mutually understandable within Tunisia. One of these dialects is called Arabe-Français. It is a high-level dialect, used most commonly by students, into which numerous specialized French terms and turns of speech have been woven.

The urban and coastal dialects resemble those spoken in other North African cities and are closest to classical Arabic. Dialects of the interior differ more substantially from the classical and have relatively low prestige. They are heavily infused with Berber words, particularly place-names taken from Berber terms for flora, fauna, and tools.

Each of the country's practical languages—colloquial Arabic, literary or intermediate Arabic, and French—symbolizes a different cultural affinity. Some urban dialects and the classical and modern forms of the written language are associated with cosmopolitan ways of life. French is the language of colonialism, but it is also the symbol of education and the door to the Western world.

Among people bilingual in French and Arabic, an inner conflict between cultures sometimes develops, but the evidences of these conflicts are not as conspicuous as they are elsewhere in the Maghrib. Some younger people, students in particular, attach a strong stigma to French, but at the same time they are more closely attuned to modern society than are their parents and realize, if reluctantly, the need for a knowledge of French. It is the language of present-day business as well as of remembered colonialism, and it is a virtual necessity for getting ahead in careers in government and commerce.

Notwithstanding reforms made to it, modern literary Arabic continues to have serious drawbacks as a contemporary language. In particular, it has failed to develop new terms required by the concepts of modern technology and science, in part because of Arabic's inadaptability to the ready addition of prefixes and suffixes or to the building of compound words. Throughout the Arab world this inadequacy is recognized as a serious handicap to technological and scientific progress, but Arabic is cherished nonetheless for its wealth and intricacy of vocabulary and for its adaptability to the poetic idiom.

In social contacts bilingual Tunisians reflect subtle class and other distinctions through choice of language. For example, if a man addresses a woman in Arabic, he is addressing her as an inferior; his choice reflects the traditional authoritarian relation between Muslim men and their wives. If he addresses her in

French, however, he is consciously or unconsciously recognizing her as a person of equivalent education or status. If an educated Tunisian speaks to an individual outside his circle of relatives or friends in colloquial Arabic, it indicates that he considers the other person to be of lower status. The choice between Arabic and French can reflect a political orientation, an attitude toward religion, or a stand in the contest between modern and traditional values. When a conversation in Arabic reaches a certain level of technicality, the speaker must switch to French. Bilingual persons talking in French about noncontroversial matter tend to change to Arabic if the conversation touches on emotional or controversial subjects.

In all Maghribi countries during the years since independence, arabization, or the replacement of the French language by Arabic, has been an important nationalist goal, particularly in public administration and the schools. The issue is somewhat less emotion-charged in Tunisia than in Algeria or Morocco, but in the late 1970s the progress of arabization was fairly well advanced. Although French remained the principal language of instruction in the University of Tunis, most of the classes at the primary-school level and many at the secondary-school level were being taught in Arabic (see Education, this ch.). Arabization of internal correspondence and public issuances had been completed in the ministries of justice and the interior, and students had been warned by government spokesmen not to look forward to jobs in the bureaucracy unless they were proficient in literary Arabic.

Only the most ardent young nationalists, however, would expect or wish to pursue arabization to the point of exclusion of the French language altogether. Soon after independence a survey of young intellectuals proficient in both languages found a marked preference for French magazines, and a smaller but still substantial majority preferred French newspapers. When asked what Frenchman had influenced him most profoundly, President Bourguiba was said to have had no hesitation in naming his French professor at Sadiki College, who had formed his judgment and taste.

The Society for the Preservation of the Quran holds that classical written Arabic must be given a higher and more honored position. The society, however, urges not that French be abandoned but that classical Arabic be given a place of distinction beside it. In the late 1970s French was still preferred by most people to classical Arabic, which also lagged behind intermediate Arabic and Arabe-Français. It seems likely that in the future a new form of modern Arabic will develop at some point between the Arabe-Français of the students and the intermediate Arabic used by the media and the politicians in their dealings with the people.

Living Conditions

Food and Clothing

Nutrition in Tunisia is generally adequate and is somewhat above the average for Maghribi countries. A 1976 International Labour Organization (ILO) study reported that food intake in calories was well above the recommended minimum for three-fourths of Tunisia's population and fell appreciably below the minimum for no more than one-tenth; the quantity of protein consumed was well above a level defined as necessary to meet physiological needs.

The general adequacy of nutrition conceals some deficiencies, however. An excessive part of the caloric intake is in carbohydrates, and diets are low in animal protein. The prevailing practice of breast-feeding babies for up to twenty-four months and weaning them abruptly to an adult diet has deleterious effects; improved nutrition standards could be expected to reduce this problem in the future.

Cereals account for about 75 percent of the calories in the average diet, and the proportion is progressively higher in poorer families. Wheat is the basic dietary element of the population. The production, importation, processing, distribution, and tightly controlled pricing of wheat are supervised by the government's National Cereals Office in order to ensure an adequate supply of wheat products to consumers at reasonable prices.

A considerable variety of fresh vegetables and fruits are available, as are such legumes as dried beans, chick-peas, and lentils. Canned milk and sardines are available but costly. Sheep, goats, and chickens can be found in every village, but sheep and goats are usually preserved for wool and chickens for egg production and sale. Animals are rarely killed and eaten, generally on special festive occasions.

Throughout the Maghrib the most popular dish is couscous, which is semolina prepared with whatever may be available—meat, fowl, fish or vegetables—and served with *harissa*, a hot sauce of red peppers, garlic, and salt. The poorest urban dwellers subsist largely on bread and *harissa*.

Couscous is regularly served at both midday and evening meals, followed by fruit. Higher income families serve meat or fish stews along with the couscous. When asked what additional food they would purchase if they could afford a more ample diet, a group of lower income Tunis families state almost unanimously that they would eat more couscous. Meat ranked a distant second.

As women achieve greater social emancipation, they increasingly wear Western clothing, but the *sifsari*—a white cloak or wraparound shawl—is still seen everywhere. Functional as well as decorative, its loose folds can cover the face like a veil or hide the baby or whatever else the wearer might be carrying. It is an outdoor garment usually worn over Western-style clothing.

In rural areas women dress in traditional fashions. The most frequently seen costume is the *mellia*, a loose drape like a sari. It is worn in combination with another drape called the *futa*, which is fixed to the *mellia* by large silver pins, and a thickly wound belt at the waist. Poorer women combine the two garments in a single strip of cloth. An eye-catching costume, the *mellia* is often worn by Tunisian entrants in international beauty contests.

Despite the advance of modern ways of living, the traditional Muslim veil has not been entirely abandoned. Its use was never common in the countryside, where women worked in the fields and a veil could have been a nuisance, but in cities it still is used sometimes for its original purpose—to provide a portable means of privacy. Older women not yet accustomed to modern, open ways sometimes continue to wear it for the feeling it affords, and younger women may wear it to avoid offending elders or as an excuse for not buying expensive Western clothes.

The everyday clothing of the educated urban man is Western attire. Ready-made suits are in good supply. The numerous good tailors in Tunis charged the equivalent of US$150 to US$200 for a made-to-order suit in the late 1970s. In northern Tunisia working-class men usually wear a two-piece work suit consisting of jacket and trousers. Elsewhere, the usual working-class garment is the djellaba, a short-sleeved tunic reaching to the ankles, that is common throughout the Maghrib.

Housing

There were slightly more than 1 million housing units in Tunisia in 1975, 45.4 percent of which were urban units and 54.6 percent rural. The total represented an increase of nearly 25 percent since 1966, a consequence of considerable housing construction during the intervening years in both public and private sectors. Construction was insufficient to meet the growing demand, however, and the ratio of inhabitants per dwelling unit moved upward substantially from 5.1 in 1966 to 5.6 in 1975.

An increasing demand for housing resulted from several factors other than demographic growth. Urban migration was the greatest single additional factor, but the continued decline of the extended family in favor of the nuclear family unit also played its part. Young couples who would have remained under the paternal roof in an earlier day were now seeking homes of their own. In addition, higher levels of income and social modernization carried with them a demand for something better than the mud huts in which a large part of the population lived.

Because of the departure of some 200,000 Europeans from Tunisia after independence, a large number of upper class residential units became vacant, and housing was not a problem for the new Tunisian elite or the incoming technicians. In addition, during the decade after independence large amounts of private capital went into the construction of relatively luxurious villas.

Working-class housing, however, represented an increasingly urgent problem. Urban migration was bringing endless flows of country people into the urban centers—into Tunis in particular—and little working-class housing of any kind was readily available. The newcomers spread either into the increasingly crowded medina or became squatters in suburban slums. In the medina the once-elegant mansions of the *baldi* (who had moved to new residential districts in the suburbs) were converted into tenements in which whole families would occupy a single room. The medina sewage system, originally installed to service a population of 40,000, was called upon to serve four or five times that number.

Elsewhere in the Maghrib the suburban shantytowns are known as bidonvilles because flattened *bidons* (tin cans) are frequently used as construction materials. The term did not develop in Tunisia because there was not an adequate supply of industrial scrap materials. Instead, the newcomers to Tunis built *gourbis,* similar to the traditional mud huts of the countryside, and *gourbivilles* came into being. When the migrant first arrives at his urban destination, he builds an earthen shelter. Later, the original unit is replaced by one of fired brick, or an extension made of fired brick is added onto the earthen dwelling. Cement block or rubble stone comes next as the builder's means permit. Given this evolving method of construction, the house is never finished, but it becomes progressively a more nearly satisfactory housing unit.

The *gourbis* of the countryside are cruder than those of the city suburbs but are generally similar. Seminomads abandon their wintertime *gourbis* to occupy tents during their summer journeying, and tents provide year-round shelter for the nomads of the desert. According to the 1975 census, about 17 percent of the population as a whole occupied *gourbis,* and 1.4 percent occupied tents (see table 5, Appendix). Over one-half of the population occupied units classified as Maison Arabe (Arab house), similar to but more substantial than the *gourbi.*

Stone dwellings are not common, except in southern oasis towns, where stone housing units stand closely clustered. In several of the more southerly oases the people live in caves. In 1975 there were about 12,000 of these cave dwellings, some of them extensive and comfortably furnished.

During the first years after independence a few complete villages were constructed in the central and southern parts of the country, and some farm housing units were built in connection with the agricultural reform programs of the 1960s. In urban localities most of the housing units were constructed by private contractors, and for the entire period from 1962 to 1972 only 104,000 public and private units were completed as compared with the 179,000 scheduled. The rate quickened thereafter. During the Fourth Plan (1963–76) period some 71,000 dwelling units had been planned, but 74,000 were built. For the Fifth Plan (1977–81) period 25,000 houses a year, or a total of 125,000, were

scheduled. The rate represented a commendable gain over the previous period, but it was not enough; an estimated 38,000 new housing units a year would be needed to keep the current shortage from worsening.

After 1973 most of the new housing was in the public sector, and for the 1977–81 period the government planned that a large majority of the new units would be for lower income families. The average scheduled price of TD3,600 (for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary) placed them beyond the reach of half of the population, however. Some authorities suggested that the government might do better by putting the money toward improving the inadequate housing units already in existence in the several squatter slums.

Well-to-do Tunisians reside in comfortable villas that resemble those of the French Riviera. Only a few live in apartment buildings, but apartment construction was on the increase in the late 1970s. Many upper class families maintain coastal summer homes as well.

Except for the villas of the urban well-to-do, most of the permanent housing is of a style common throughout the Maghrib. The houses are of stone, concrete, or adobe and have flat or gently sloping roofs, whitewashed or tinted exteriors, and a minimum of narrow windows. In the old Arab quarters, or medinas, the houses are closely ranked on narrow winding streets. The houses, often surrounding inner courtyards, present almost windowless faces to the street. The sparsely furnished rooms are small, but the houses commonly reach a height of three stories.

Employment

In the late 1970s agriculture remained the principal employer, but no one knew exactly how many farmers there were. Statisticians do not always agree on the criteria by which farm people—women in particular—are determined to be economically active. A great many farm wives and daughters work seasonally or irregularly in the fields or in household tasks related to agricultural production. If considered active, they are classified as unpaid family workers.

Despite the confusion in statistics, it is clear that agricultural employment has experienced a relative decline as surplus farm workers have migrated to the cities and towns (see Population, this ch.). At the same time, relatively fewer farm hands are required as mechanization of agriculture advances and other innovations increase the crop yield per unit of land in the modern farming sector. Since independence the government has broken up and distributed the great estates that once belonged to European colonists and has endeavored to modernize farming practices through establishment of cooperatives, training programs, extension of credit, and other means. In the late 1970s, however, a large majority of the farmers remained in the traditional sector, engaged in subsistence agriculture and, when possible, exchanging a part of their crops for cash or goods.

Employment in the fast-growing nonagricultural sectors rose significantly between 1972 and 1976 (see table 4, Appendix). Unlike agriculture, industries and services were largely in the modern employment sector. Handicraft production varies from the occasional weaving and sewing by housewives to the production of high-quality rugs and other traditional woven products, ceramics, metalwork, and woodwork produced in modern shops and marketed by the National Handicraft Office, which maintains offices in all major population centers.

The level of industrial employment in the late 1970s was only slightly lower than that in services, and it was rising at a somewhat faster rate. Tunisia was one of the relatively small number of developing countries where industry was creating new jobs sufficient to absorb a large share of the growing nonagricultural labor force. A more common pattern elsewhere has been one in which most of the new workers have been forced to take service-sector jobs, many of them as street vendors or domestic servants, as the only alternative to unemployment.

Many of the new jobs in Tunisia have been created with the benefit of government assistance. Public construction projects have been largely labor intensive and have provided work for an increasing number of individuals. The 1974 Investment Code gives fiscal advantages to enterprises creating new jobs. In the late 1970s the prospects of continued job creation at a rate sufficient to reduce unemployment or even to prevent its increase were dubious, however. Young women were entering the labor market in unprecedented numbers, and the number of Tunisian workers going abroad in seasonal employment had declined sharply after 1973 (see Population, this ch.). The closing of this important safety valve against increasing unemployment could have disastrous consequences by the early 1980s.

Unemployment was variously estimated at 10 to 15 percent of the labor force during the early 1970s and was calculated at 14 percent in the 1975 population census. Underemployment was also heavy, particularly in the agricultural sector where at least 40 percent of the working force was believed to be underemployed, a situation reflecting a large amount of seasonal unemployment. At peak seasons such as harvests, however, labor shortages develop regionally.

In January 1977 the government concluded what it called a social pact, providing for social peace, increased production, and improved working conditions for wage earners. The visiting secretary general of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) called it a model example "to be followed not only by developing countries, but by some developed ones as well."

A year later, however, a twenty-four-hour general strike that precipitated bloody riots occurred (see Major Political Developments, ch. 4; see Threats to Internal Security, ch. 5). At that time unemployment was said to be running as high as 25 percent, and in

March 1978 the National Assembly enacted a new law giving the government the right to conscript any unemployed Tunisian between the ages of eighteen and thirty for what was called the Civilian Service (Service Civile). The measure was said to be aimed at unemployment, and it was announced that men would be drafted first in areas where spot manpower shortages existed. Observers looked back on the civil disorders in January 1978, however, and concluded that the legislation might have been more politically than economically motivated.

Health and Welfare

Tunisia inherited from the French a scarcely adequate health program that had suffered the loss of most of the European medical and paramedical personnel, including well over one-half of the physicians. The preamble of the 1959 Constitution asserted the "right to the protection of health," however, and during the years after independence a great deal of money and effort were directed toward implementing the constitutional declaration. Budgetary expenditures per capita for health projects soon exceeded those in most countries, and in 1977 health allocations absorbed 10.4 percent of the government's budget, second only to education.

Most of the doctors remaining after the exodus of the Europeans were concentrated in and around Tunis. To make more effective use of the critically limited supply of physicians, the government at first required all doctors to serve at least three hours daily in public facilities. In 1963 this requirement gave way to a much more radical one in which nearly 80 percent of the physicians had to serve full time in public institutions, with only a few hours left open for private practice.

Public health salaries were relatively low, and the measure aroused strong hostility on the part of well-to-do patients as well as the doctors. This virtual socialization of the medical profession may have stimulated further emigration by doctors and may have discouraged Tunisian medical students from returning home after completing training abroad. Socialization of the medical profession soon showed itself to be a failure, however, and the policy was reversed in 1969, the same year that saw abandonment of the socialistic agricultural reform program (see Land Use, Tenure, and Reform, ch. 3).

The depleted ranks of the medical profession were gradually expanded as the new Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tunis began to contribute its graduates, and the government contracted for the services of a large number of physicians from abroad, including many from Eastern Europe. In 1974 some 438 of the 857 doctors in practice in Tunisia were foreigners serving under contract. It was these contract personnel who were sent out to staff most of the rural medical facilities in the interior. After declining to a total of eight in the entire country in 1962, the number of dentists increased to seventy-two in 1974.

By 1972 paramedical personnel of all kinds numbered about 5,000. The total included more than 1,000 trained nurses, but nurses are not permitted to perform many services for patients, and the failure to delegate authority to them is seen as a significant deficiency in the medical system. In addition to lacking sufficient substantive duties, the nursing profession suffers from low pay, a lack of prestige, and the frequent indifference of doctors.

The country's first medical school was established at the University of Tunis in 1964; the first class of eighty graduated in 1970. At later dates facilities were opened in Safaqis and Susah.

In the late 1970s dental students were still sent abroad for study, but establishment of a Tunisian dental school in the early 1980s was planned. A variety of schools offered programs for nurses, nursing auxiliaries, midwives, and laboratory technicians. In the mid-1970s eight schools of nursing were producing about 400 graduates annually, and it was believed that the number of nurses and auxiliaries would soon be sufficient to meet national requirements. In contrast, only about fifty midwives were being graduated annually in the mid-1970s, and at least 400 were needed in addition to the 200 then in practice.

Most of the hospitals in 1978 were in Tunis and the other large urban areas, but the public health inpatient facilities operated under a so-called pyramid system in which rural as well as urban inhabitants could obtain treatment in the city hospitals. Patients were referred upward for treatment from rural dispensaries and small auxiliary hospitals scattered about the countryside to regional hospitals in each of the country's four medical regions and finally to the large urban general and specialized hospitals.

Hospital service is free to workers covered by social security and to their families, and costs to others are nominal. Country people receive—and presumably demand—relatively little inpatient care.

In 1976 there were also 446 outpatient dispensaries, almost three times the number in existence at the time of independence. The proliferation of these units during the postindependence years has meant that in the late 1970s almost every town had at least one, in which one or more outpatient clinics were held weekly. A large majority of the dispensaries were in rural localities, and only in the areas of extremely dispersed population was accessibility to some form of health care a problem.

By the late 1970s vaccinations and other preventive measures had brought under control major communicable diseases, such as smallpox, typhoid, diphtheria, polio, and typhus. Since 1971 medical students have been required to take training in preventive medicine, and the Preventive and Social Medicine Division of the Ministry of Health conducts regular campaigns against malaria, trachoma, and schistosomiasis and assigns personnel to combat outbreaks of other diseases, particularly cholera. It is responsible for vaccinations and for the detection and treatment of communi-

cable diseases. The organization has about 1,000 employees, but the average level of training is low.

For the population as a whole, the principal health hazards are intestinal infections and parasites, trachoma, hepatitis, tuberculosis, syphilis, schistosomiasis, and typhoid and paratyphoid. Rural people are particularly susceptible to respiratory ailments, while digestive disorders are principally urban complaints. In the 1970s polio, diphtheria, and whooping cough were on the decline, but gastrointestinal and upper respiratory infections and skin disorders were on the increase. Nearly one-half of all deaths were among childen under the age of five years.

In rural localities the auxiliary hospital physician holds a morning clinic and in the afternoon visits one of the several dispensaries in the area. These dispensaries, staffed by nurses and auxiliaries, are extremely busy during the hours when the visiting doctor is holding his clinic. The facilities are often short of personnel and drugs, but for rural people they are an initial point of contact where attitudes toward health care are developed.

Except in Tunis and a few other urban centers, public sanitation is poor or lacking. In the capital city adequate drinking water is available; central waterborne sewage and central treatment facilities are available but overtaxed. The older quarters of Tunis—as well as the other cities—are inadequately serviced, however. In villages, waste is used for fertilizer or is dumped just outside the village perimeter.

The water supply is generally adequate in northern Tunisia and the Sahil, but it is inadequate elsewhere, particularly in summer. Except where drawn from artesian wells, the supplies are often polluted by human waste and may be unsuitable even for agricultural purposes.

Unsanitary rural shacks and urban *gourbivilles* are notorious sources of disease. Traditional funeral rites and some folk medical practices also are health hazards. Indigenous funerary tradition—still practiced in some rural localities—requires distributing the clothing and bedding of the deceased and kissing and hugging the corpse. The traditional Islamic view of life bespeaks a fatalistic acceptance of disease and physical distress, which inhibits the seeking of medical help, and a traditional fear of hospitalization may explain an often heard rural preference for outpatient care. Some rural parents will not permit their children to be hospitalized, and custom requires that an individual die at home. Nonetheless, according to a government estimate, about four-fifths of the population received some kind of medical assistance in a hospital or dispensary during 1976.

Legislation enacted in 1960 created the Social Security System and the Social Security Fund, charged with the management of the system's benefits. Initially applicable to industrial and commercial workers in establishments with twenty or more employees, the program was extended to university students in 1966, and in 1970

an insurance system was instituted for farm workers. By the mid-1970s about 1 million workers and their families were believed covered.

Benefits under the program include retirement pay, sick pay, maternity leave, survivor benefits, and family allowances for industrial and commercial workers only. Medical care includes medical equipment and treatment abroad, where necessary. Payments to the program for industrial and commercial personnel consist of 5 percent of their salaries paid by workers and 15 percent contributed by employers. Contributions paid by agricultural workers are nominal.

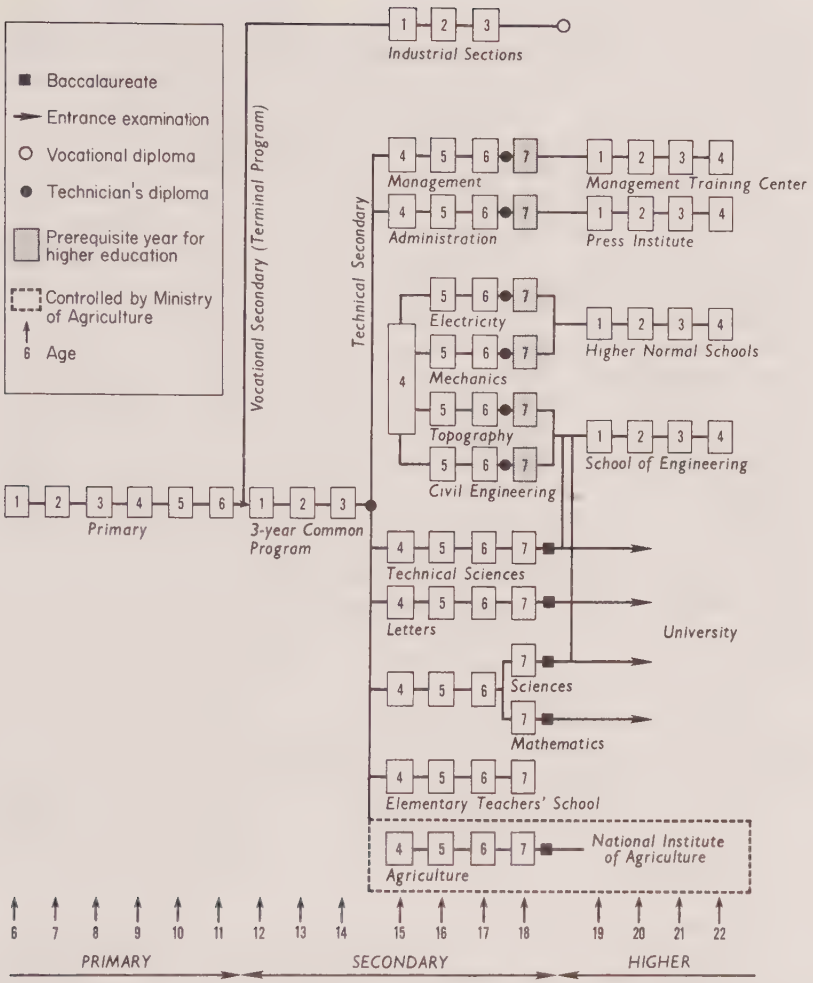
In traditional Tunisian society the tribe, the village, or the extended family could generally be counted on to provide care for needy and elderly members. Community and family continue to play a welfare role, but in modernized independent Tunisia the bulk of the welfare burden has been shifted to the public sector.

Education

Rooted in the French educational tradition, the school system consists of a six-year primary cycle followed by a secondary program consisting of a three-year lower cycle and a four-year upper cycle of study in academic or technical fields of concentration (see fig. 8; table 6, Appendix). The secondary-level Tunisian student assumes a degree of specialization encountered by the North American student only at the university level. Paralleling the common cycle of secondary school is a terminal three-year vocational cycle leading directly to employment. Higher education is provided only by the University of Tunis and by a few specialized institutions. The 1958 basic law of education makes public education free at all levels and available to all, regardless of race, sex, or religion. Educational authorities, however, have determined it neither necessary nor desirable to make school attendance mandatory.

Private schools, with about 2 percent of the primary- and secondary-school enrollment, follow public-school rules on curriculum and staffing. They are financed chiefly by their sponsoring organizations and enrollment fees, although they receive some government assistance. Relatively few in number, they are most numerous in Tunis and for the most part are operated by religious organizations. In addition, the French University and Cultural Mission, a section of the French embassy, operates primary and secondary schools for French nationals, which are also attended by a considerable number of Tunisian children.

In 1956 the entire public educational system was placed under the secretary of state for education, and some 200 Quranic schools were nationalized. Subsequently the secretary of state for agriculture became responsible for agricultural education at all levels, and the secretary of state for health became responsible for schools of nursing, midwifery, laboratory technology, and social service. A few other specialized institutions were administered by other



Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Secretariat of State for Information, *Tunisia Moves Ahead*, Tunis, 1976, p. 280.

Figure 8. Organization of Educational System, 1976

agencies, but in the late 1970s schools representing about 85 percent of the enrollment at all levels reported to the secretary of state for education. Regional authorities were responsible for day-to-day school operations, but the system was generally a centralized one.

Primary and secondary schools hold classes six days per week during a three-semester school year that commences early in October and ends late in June. Primary classes in some localities operate double shifts because of an acute shortage of facilities.

The government sees education as a vital key to socioeconomic modernization and regularly devotes from one-fourth to one-third of its national budget to school costs. In 1977 the current expenditures allocation to education represented more than 30 percent of the total, one of the highest proportions in the world.

In an effort to democratize education and make schooling available to children who might not otherwise attend a school, the government finances the cost of school supplies, clothing, and meals for the needy; and it maintains liberal scholarship and financial assistance programs. In order to meet its heavy commitments in the educational field, Tunisia has received considerable outside financial and technical assistance. The World Bank (see Glossary) has extended several educational loans, and soon after independence the government concluded a cultural agreement with France for the provision of a large number of teachers. In addition, the United States, several other countries, and several of the specialized agencies of the United Nations have furnished assistance in various forms.

In 1956 only about 30 percent of the children of primary-school age and 10 percent of those of secondary-school age were enrolled in schools. By 1969 these proportions had been raised to about 70 percent and 40 percent, respectively, although enrollment was unevenly distributed, most of it occurring in the cities and the Sahil.

The gain had been phenomenal, but at that time the government reached a decision that may have been unique in the educational annals of developing countries. Enrollments were deliberately cut back. Plans were made for further restriction of secondary enrollments through 1977, and several facilities for the training of primary-school teachers were closed.

No corresponding budgetary cutbacks were made, however, as the enrollment cuts were made solely in order to improve the quality of education. They were accomplished by restricting the number of times a student was permitted to repeat grades and by raising standards. At the same time, greater emphasis was placed on scientific and technical schooling. The reforms were not intended as elitist; but because they increased competition among students, they placed a relative burden on rural and poor families whose children were less likely to be well prepared for the increasingly competitive examinations.

Ranking high among the goals of the school program has been an improvement of educational opportunities for girls. In 1956 only about 70,000 girls and young women were enrolled in schools of any kind, but between 1957 and 1972 female enrollment rose from 30 to 39 percent of the total; at the secondary level, it rose from 21 to 28 percent. Most of the secondary as well as the primary classes were coeducational.

Instruction is bilingual, but courses conducted in French are gradually being switched to Arabic as suitably trained teachers and

textbooks become available and as new syllabi are prepared. In 1976 first-year courses in primary school were taught entirely in Arabic, but French was introduced in 40 percent of the classes in the second and third years, and additional classes in French were added in the upper years. Tunisian teachers, however, presided over nearly all of the classes, irrespective of the language of instruction.

At the secondary level, except in the vocational schools, one-half to three-quarters of the instruction is in French, the proportion varying with the program carried by the student. In general, French is used for mathematics, science, and technical subjects. It has been found that the structure of the Arabic language and the absence of technical words make the teaching of these disciplines in Arabic difficult or impossible (see Language and Society, this ch.).

In Tunisia as elsewhere in the Maghrib, efforts are being made to stress practical subjects needed by the developing economy. Beginning in 1973 a practical program called Initiation to Manual Work was offered in the fifth and sixth grades in some schools. At the secondary level, enrollments in technical classes have increased tremendously but remain far below those in the academic program. Enrollment in the vocational schools has also risen sharply, but in the mid-1970s only about one student in four was completing the courses of study. The generally discouraging response of students to technical and vocational programs is particularly disappointing to school administrators because of their relatively high cost. Expensive shops and demonstration equipment are required, and a high proportion of the teachers are relatively highly paid expatriates. In addition, smaller classes—and therefore more teachers—are more necessary than in the academic program.

The country's only university, the University of Tunis, was founded in 1960 by the consolidation of several existing institutions. It consists of five faculties and numerous attached schools and institutions (see table 7, Appendix). Its Faculty of Theology and Religious Science was formerly the Zituna University, founded in 1283 and a renowned center of Islamic studies, one of the few to survive among many founded during the Middle Ages.

Also offering studies at the university level is the National School of Administration, which is maintained by the Office of the President of the Republic for the training of higher civil servants. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Information are responsible, respectively, for the National Institute of Agriculture and the Institute of Art and Technology. The Advanced Merchant Marine Institute was opened in 1976. Enrollments in institutions of higher education of all kinds increased from about 2,000 in 1957 to more than 21,000 in 1977. Female enrollments were up from 17 percent of the total in 1957 to 23 percent in 1972.

Most of the university classes are taught in French, although teaching is in Arabic in the Faculty of Theology and Religious Science, the Department of Arabic Law, and the Department of Arabic Language and Letters. In 1973 nearly one-third of the student body was enrolled in the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, and most of the remainder were engaged in studies in law and medicine. More emphasis was being placed on technical studies, however; between 1973 and 1977 enrollments were up from 3,000 to 7,700 in the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics, and Natural Science, and in 1976 the Ministry of Education announced plans for a decentralization of higher education aimed both at lessening the concentration of students in the capital city and at developing facilities for the training of technical cadres in the regions where they would most be needed.

During the late 1970s between 50 and 55 percent of the population over the age of fifteen were considered literate. Current data on literacy by sex and by geographic region were not available, but in 1967 the rates had been reported at 47 percent for males and 18 percent for females. Literacy had varied regionally, from 73.4 percent in Tunis to 28.7 percent in the rural governorate of Al Qasrayn. Overall approximately 80 percent of the urban population is considered literate.

For the most part, Tunisia has relied principally on its expanding regular school system both for the reduction of illiteracy and for adult education. Soon after independence, however, the Institute for Adult Education commenced to offer literacy and education programs in special centers. Literacy classes were also established for workers by business enterprises, by the armed forces, and by the National Federation of Tunisian Women.

In 1974 about 27,000 individuals were receiving some kind of schooling outside the regular educational system. Most of these brief courses had been established immediately after independence as training centers hurriedly assembled to prepare Tunisians for jobs vacated by the departing Europeans.

Other programs included courses of study in basic literature and child care offered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In addition, increasing use was being made of television as a means of teaching basic literary skills and such subjects as history, geography, accounting, and family planning. The courses were directed by the Institute of Educational Television.

During the years immediately after independence a shortage of teachers sometimes made double shifts in classrooms necessary. After 1973, however, it was apparent that the number of teachers available had been brought up to the need for personnel in both French and Arabic languages of instruction. The emphasis shifted from quantity in teacher preparation, and the number of primary teacher-training schools was reduced. Unqualified teachers were

Primary school pupils in the classroom
Courtesy U.S. Agency for International Development

upgraded through new in-service training classes or were assigned as social workers.

Tunisification of education—the progressive replacement of expatriate teachers by Tunisian personnel—is a program of considerable importance but is less emotion charged than in similar programs elsewhere in the Maghrib. By 1973, however, Tunisians were filling almost all of the positions at the primary level, and the number of expatriates at the secondary level was down to about one-fourth of the total. A teacher shortage continued in French, physics, and the technical disciplines, but in 1973 a cultural accord was reached with France for the creation of higher teacher-training schools that were to make full Tunisification of secondary-school teachers possible by the early 1980s. At the university level, however, more than one-half of the teachers were expatriates, and Tunisification of the faculties and institutes remained a distant goal to which not much priority was attached.

* * *

Change in Tunisia: Studies in the Social Sciences, edited by Russell A. Stone and John Simmons, is one of the few recent English-language publications devoted to social aspects of Tunisia. The articles are informative, although several were prepared considerably earlier than the volume's 1976 publication date. *La Tunisie à la recherche de son avenir* by Jean Poncet explores the modernization of Tunisia through the early 1970s. Raphael Patai's *Golden River to Golden Road* is somewhat dated (1969) but furnishes a fine survey of Middle Eastern culture in general, with much material pertinent to Tunisia; and *Arabs Today* by Joel Carmichael gives more recent and more concise information of a similar nature.

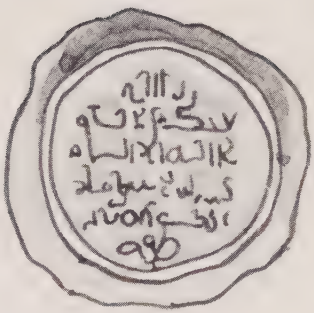
Henri de la Bastide's *Maghreb: Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc* gives a useful comparison of current social conditions in the Maghrib. John P. Entelis' "Reformist Ideology in the Arab World: The Cases of Tunisia and Lebanon" in the *Review of Politics* compares social conditions in these two countries during the early 1970s.

The most significant social phenomenon in Tunisia during the years since independence has been the program of modernization within the framework of Islam. In this connection, *An Introduction to Law in French-Speaking Africa, II: North Africa* by Jeswald W. Salacuse is of particular value for its excellent summary of Tunisia's landmark Code of Personal Status, which—supplemented by certain other legislation also covered by Salacuse—has served as the keystone of the social modernization program.

Other articles published in the 1970s focus on specific phases of the Tunisian scene. Nicholas S. Hopkins' "The Emergence of Class in a Tunisian Town" in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* finds a class structure pattern emerging in a primarily rural setting. Jellal Adelkafi, writing in *Maghreb-Machrek*, exam-

ines the problems of urbanization in the 1970s in "Tunis: Les conditions de l'urbanisation." Also writing in *Maghreb-Machrek,* Younès Zoughlami and Hichem Skik in "L'enseignement en Tunisie vingt ans après la réforme de 1958" discuss the evolution of education and the broader question of the gradual replacement of French by Arabic as a language of instruction in the schools and as a language in general business and social use. In *Syncresis: The Dynamics of Health* by Lyndell G. Beamer and Martha L. Anderson, one of a series of studies on health conditions in foreign countries by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, much information is provided on the improving health conditions and public health program. (For further information see Bibliography.)

Chapter 3. The Economy



Ancient Tunisian coins

THE TUNISIAN ECONOMY is described by the government as being a tripartite one: that is, a mixture of state ownership, private enterprise, and cooperatives, the latter being of less importance in the 1970s than during the 1960s. The principles of Bourguibism (named after the president) are followed by the government in its economic policy. Bourguibism is defined as a pragmatic and moderate approach coupled with flexibility and opportunism. This enables the government to change policies that seem to have failed, such as the movement into cooperatives in the 1960s, and to encourage private initiative while maintaining a fairly large public sector. After the shift away from cooperatives, the economy witnessed a boom period during the 1970s stimulated by a mood of business confidence and more liberal economic measures.

The growth of the economy appears impressive when measured against those of many other developing countries, but Tunisia does have some difficulties to face. One of the major factors in the economic growth has been the political stability enjoyed since independence, President Habib Bourguiba's charisma has enabled him to stir enthusiasm among the workers for greater productivity. Because of his advanced age and ill health, however, concerns were being felt in the late 1970s about the stability of the country after his demise. Already a series of strikes in 1977 and 1978 were hurting the economy and causing some political uncertainty. If the government gave in to labor demands for wages higher than agreed upon, its fight against inflationary pressures would be harmed. But if it stood firm against labor's demands, violence was likely to break out.

There are still balance-of-payments deficits, a growing foreign debt burden, and substantial unemployment. One of the priorities of the 1977–81 development plan is the creation of at least 60,000 new jobs annually. Agriculture, which provides for more than one-half of total employment, suffers from limited water resources, outmoded land tenure arrangements, and rural-to-urban outflow. Since agriculture is the largest economic sector, poor harvests and low prices have a disproportionate effect on the economy.

Still a predominantly agricultural country, Tunisia has been making progress toward industrialization despite a modest resource base, limited markets, and a shortage of investment capital. This progress is the result of extensive foreign aid, pragmatic planning, and a diminishing resistance to the adoption of modern values. The government places a high emphasis on industrial expansion, not only to achieve the goals of development but also to stabilize national income and to create jobs for a growing population.

Of all sectors of the economy, industry has had the sharpest growth since independence. The development of modern indus-

try, however, has taken place only since the early 1960s and is dependent on foreign assistance. In addition to investment capital, the country relies on official and private agencies abroad for credits, raw materials, and technical aid. The country has adequate resources in petroleum and natural gas to sustain a modest level of industrialization (see fig. 9). Phosphates are the most important mineral resource and, along with petroleum, are major earners of foreign exchange.

The principal domestic crops are wheat, barley, oats, corn, and sorghum. Olives, citrus fruit, grapes, and dates are also significant. Most of the wheat is grown in the northern valleys; the barley, characterized by its ability to withstand dryness, comes from the unirrigated lands in the north and central regions. Animal husbandry is of minor importance. Lack of water is a critical difficulty confronting two-thirds of the country. To make up for the deficiency the government has been allocating larger amounts of funds to water projects.

Along with other categories of industry, the construction industry has also shown progress. Emphasis has been on public buildings, irrigation projects, and improvement of roads and ports. The electric power supply is inadequate to the task of raising the industrial level of the country, and solid fuel and hydraulic energy are insufficient for modern needs. Electricity, usually generated at thermal plants, involves costly materials from abroad. Power is unevenly distributed throughout the country. Most of the electrical capacity is in the north, the region of greatest population density.

The government owes a considerable part of its economic infrastructure to the era of the protectorate when French administrative procedures and technical methods took root. The present-day financial system, for example, demonstrates a notable reflection of this influence, a consequence of the exposure to Western concepts of monetary affairs introduced by France in the 1880s. The fiscal institutions developed by the government retain an essentially French cast, as does private enterprise.

Income and Wealth

Tunisia has experienced economic growth rates seldom encountered elsewhere in Africa. During the 1970–76 period the real gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average annual rate of about 9 percent, almost double the rate for the decade of the 1960s. The growth rate for 1977, however, was much lower and was provisionally set at 4 percent. In absolute terms the GDP grew from TD395 million in 1956 to over TD1.9 billion in 1976 (for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary). The impressive growth rate of the 1970s is attributable to various factors, not the least of which was the shift in government policy from a controlled economy toward a more free market economy. Also helpful were an improvement in the investment climate, a drive for industrial

Figure 9. Economic Activity, 1978

development, increased exports, and favorable weather for agricultural production.

The evaluation of the GDP varies from sector to sector, the most accurate figures being those for electricity, mining, metalworking, and food processing. In some industries production figures from only a few companies are used, and estimates based on these figures are made for the rest of the industry. Agricultural data are based upon a small number of commodities that account for about one-half of total production. Employment, price, and wage data are considered very weak. Agriculture generally is the leading contributor to the GDP, although a catchall category of housing, commerce, and services is sometimes shown in national accounts data as the leading contributor. The services category includes tourism, which by itself contributes only a small share to the GDP but actually is the leading foreign exchange earner.

Per capital income data vary depending on the source and ranged between the equivalent of US$633 and US$800 for 1976. In 1978 a government spokesman referred to a 1976 per capita income level of US$690 and set a goal of US$944 by 1981, the end date for the 1977–81 development plan. The poverty level in 1976 was estimated at the equivalent of US$191. Income inequalities exist in Tunisia, although the government claims that the disparities between rich and poor are diminishing. In an interview in 1977 the prime minister stated that increased production was now more important to the government than increased distribution of wealth. Only 16 percent of the population was said to be earning below the poverty level compared with around 27 percent a decade earlier.

Various studies, albeit based upon suspect or scanty statistics, seem to bear out the contention that the general level of income of wage earners has improved and that the number of families with incomes below the poverty level continues to decrease. Further, increased public expenditures on social services benefit the most disadvantaged. Many of the poor live outside the money economy, either as subsistence farmers who produce little for the market or as agricultural workers who are paid in kind rather than in cash. Significant percentages of agricultural production, homemade handicrafts, and transportation services take place on or near a subsistence level and defy economic measurement, either because they are used by the producer's own family or because they are bartered or sold without record in the informal rural marketplace. Rural minimum wages are periodically increased at a faster rate than industrial wages to bridge the gap between the two. The definition of rural and urban in Tunisia is different from that in many other countries. In Tunisian government income surveys only the larger cities are considered urban areas, and all other towns are included in rural data.

Although income disparities are most notable between urban and rural areas, inequalities also exist within urban areas. Per

capita rural income is said to be about one-half that of per capita urban income; but because of the large internal migrations, in the late 1970s there were many recently arrived city dwellers living below the poverty level. Workers in the oil industry generally receive higher wages than persons in other industries. One survey indicated that oil workers tend to support more dependents than any other kind of industrial workers. Although great individual wealth is rare in Tunisia, many families in Safaqis have accumulated fortunes from the olive oil trade and from general commerce. That city is the only urban area where Jarban merchants have not been able to penetrate. Far out of proportion to their percentage of the population, persons from the island of Jarbah have migrated to the mainland and are said to constitute about one-half the merchant class of the country. By working hard and demonstrating good business acumen, Jarbans have moved to the top in the field of commerce. In like manner, people from Susah seem to have obtained more government positions than have persons from other areas.

An agreement called a social pact was reached in early 1977 between the government, the ruling political party, trade unions, and employer representatives. The pact, which was supposed to last through the end of the 1977–81 development plan, provided for social peace (no strikes), increased productivity, improved working conditions, and greater purchasing power for workers. In return, civil servants and employees of local government and state entities were to receive phased annual wage increases every January, and private and agricultural workers were to receive increases based upon annual negotiations to be held every April. All wage raises were to reflect increases in productivity and the cost of living. The 1978 increases, however, were equivalent only to the rise in the cost of living and apparently did not take lowered productivity into account.

The cost-of-living index rose by 9.3 percent in 1977; the largest increase—over 29 percent—was in the cost of transportation, and the smallest increase was in foodstuffs. Two price indexes are used: a monthly consumer price index that measures mainly lower income groups in Tunis and its suburbs, and a wholesale price index that measures both domestic and imported goods. A major preoccupation of the government is the control of retail prices. While this earns the government considerable support among the population, it costs dearly in subsidies. Because of the drain on the budget, the government periodically lifts part of the subsidies, which causes prices to rise. Still, most consumer prices in Tunisia are lower than world levels.

The comprehensive system of price controls is formulated in several ways. For mass consumption necessities, such as bread, meat, flour, oil, and tea, as well as for public transportation, lodging, and cement, the maximum retail prices or fares are set directly by the government. Some items have prices that are

determined by adding fixed maximum profit margins to the wholesale or retail costs of the products. This method is applied to most imports and to an increasing number of domestic goods. Prices of some commodities are established by proposals to the government from the manufacturer, supported by data. This method is generally used by producers of new items for sale, and if not rejected within a set period the proposed price becomes the maximum legal price for the goods in question. Other items have freely fluctuating prices or have prices that are registered with the government in advance of their imposition. Because of the heavy reliance on the maximum profit margin technique and the readiness of the government to adjust fixed prices in response to underlying market forces, the Tunisian price control system is considered to be reasonably effective despite its complexity.

Role of the Government

There is no economic sector where the state does not intervene either directly or indirectly. One of the goals of the government is to reduce income disparities and make a more equitable division of the economic pie. It thus acts as lawmaker, planner, investor, manager, and owner. As the source of regulatory legislation and as the author of comprehensive planning for development, the state is supreme. Its role as investor, manager, and owner varies widely between industries, ranging from sole owner to a partnership arrangement with private foreign or domestic owners. For enterprises that are wholly private and deemed to be important to the development of the economy, the state offers direct investment services through public lending institutions.

The government directly employs between 10 and 18 percent of the total work force. In 1977 it had over 136,000 people on its payroll, and the number of government employees has been increasing at a faster rate than the annual growth of population. In the field of finance the government exercises a broad role, controlling the monetary supply, investments, and prices. It has general control over rail, sea, air, and road transport. With regard to agriculture, government policy until the 1970s was characterized as one of energetic and comprehensive reform, including land reclamation projects, reforms of the land tenure system, formation and operation of cooperatives, and control over agricultural investment, credit, prices, and marketing procedures. By the end of 1969, however, it had become obvious that state intervention in agriculture had a disastrous effect on production, and the collectivization program was scrapped almost overnight (see Land Use, Tenure, and Reform, this ch.).

The role of the public sector in manufacturing also has been declining since the shift in emphasis back to encouraging private investment. During the 1960s the state had accounted for as much as 86 percent of total new investment in manufacturing, but by 1976 the percentage was down to less than one-half that figure. Among the various rationales given for state-owned manufacturing

enterprises was the need to start new industries that required higher investments than the private sector could afford or to encourage development of a region where private enterprise was reluctant to locate. At the time it abandoned its policy of exercising the prime role in manufacturing, the government owned more than sixty major firms.

In its role as planner and investor, the government relies on the framework set forth in the various development plans, all of which have been aimed at raising the standard of living, diversifying agriculture, and encouraging industrial growth. The first attempt was the Ten-Year Perspective Plan of Development 1962–71, which was really a long-range policy statement. Since then there have been five medium-term plans, the first three of which attempted to implement the policy of the ten-year plan. Originally overoptimistic, these plans became more pragmatic by the end of the decade. The performance of the First Three Year Plan 1962–64 was well below plan goals, and most of the country's foreign exchange holdings were used up to pay for the projects started. Borrowing from the domestic banking system to help finance completion of the projects only added to inflationary pressures. Part of the difficulty of the first plan was that the statistics upon which it was based were sparse and unreliable.

The second medium-term plan was called the Four-Year Plan 1965–68 and was based upon more detailed and accurate statistics. It continued the development policy of the first plan but with some modifications of objectives and financing. It focused more upon industrial projects. Most goals of the next plan, called the Third Development Plan 1969–72, were met because of a very favorable growth rate in 1972 that pulled the average growth for the period above the projected rate. The third plan stressed investment in agriculture and in sectors having a comparative advantage over foreign competitors.

By the end of the decade the planning process in Tunisia had become more sophisticated and realistic. Instead of containing overenthusiastic statements and ill-conceived programs, the later plans were periodically reviewed and were designed to create a climate conducive to development by enabling many agencies and persons to share in developing the plan. In 1971 the Ministry of Planning was created to prepare the plans, although by 1975 the function was merged with the prime minister's office, and the separate ministry had disappeared. Since then a deputy minister has been in charge of planning. Alternative broad objectives are drawn up by the planning authorities; from these the National Planning Council, a body that includes representatives from many ministries and agencies, selects a major objective to be pursued in the next plan. This is then expanded and transmitted to ministries and sectoral and regional committees for inclusion of detailed sectoral and local projects compatible with the main objective. A final draft is synthesized and forwarded to the National Planning

Council for approval and submission to the National Assembly for passage into law.

The Fourth Plan 1973–76, which had been much better developed than its predecessors, called for the equivalent of about US$3 billion in planned investments. The high investment made under the plan paid off in the creation of an estimated 164,000 new jobs, the meeting of most targets, and the achievement of most objectives. Unfortunately, persons entering the job market during that period exceeded the number of new jobs, and thus unemployment was not alleviated. The 1977–81 development plan, which has been officially designated simply the Fifth Plan, provided for an even larger investment, the equivalent of US$10 billion, and an average growth rate of 7.5 percent during the period. Priorities under the Fifth Plan include development of water resources, expansion of petroleum and phosphate processing industries, and modernization of the transportation system.

Public Finance and Banking

Before the government adopted a centrally directed economic and social development plan, national budgets were usually held in balance and occasionally even showed surpluses, as they did in 1961 and 1962. Current expenditures were geared to expected revenue from ordinary sources, and capital or investment expenditures were made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the availability of funds for particular projects rather than in accordance with a set of overall planning goals.

Beginning in the mid-1960s the national budgetary process took on a new focus in conformity with the government's commitment to planned national development, and the budgets themselves became major instruments in the planning and execution of the development effort. The budgets are now geared to the objectives of the plan, and annual adjustments are made in the plan after an assessment of the economic situation of the previous year.

The budget specifies both the expenditures and the revenues of the central government and is operative for the fiscal year, which coincides with the calendar year. It is drawn up in two parts—an ordinary or administrative budget and a capital or investment budget. In addition there are special treasury and extrabudgetary accounts. The ordinary budget, which generally accounts for about two-thirds of the government expenditure, allocates funds to cover the usual recurring operating costs of government, such as salaries, purchase of goods and services, and transfers, including the operations of any state-owned business enterprises that are not fully self-supporting. The capital budget is the vehicle for funding investment expenditures and other nonrecurring, extraordinary governmental obligations. It also includes some current expenditures related to investments and some lending to public enterprises.

The special accounts receive certain earmarked revenues and are used for specific purposes: current, capital, or lending opera-

tions. In total the various special accounts may be equal to as much as one-fourth of total government expenditures, and they exert an important effect on the economy. The single most important special account is the Price Stabilization Fund, which pays for subsidies on selected foodstuffs and certain basic raw materials. Some extrabudgetary accounts reflect the receipts and expenditures from foreign grants and loans.

Responsibility for drafting the annual budget rests with the planning authorities. The ministries and separate governmental agencies annually submit expenditure estimates and justifications to that office, which after review and consolidation forwards them to the Budget Service and the Public Expenditure Control Section of the Secretariat of State for the Presidency. These offices examine the proposals for feasibility and conformity with governmental policy. Any modifications proposed by the reviewing offices are submitted to budget committees consisting of representatives of each of the ministries.

The budget committees iron out any interministerial differences over proposed appropriations that may have developed, and the budget thus established is then forwarded to the Social and Economic Council, presided over by the president of the republic, for approval and subsequent introduction in the National Assembly for enactment into law. In practice, the budgets are generally accepted as submitted, with little debate.

Government budgets have increased progressively since 1960, representing the growing role played by the state in the country's economic activity. From 1976 to 1977 the current budget increased from a level of nearly TD110 million to over TD440 million. In 1978, however, the current budget was cut back to TD421 million, reflecting an attempt to operate the central government on a more austere budget. During the same period the investment budget jumped from TD39 million to TD295 million and in 1978 to TD368 million. The larger amount in 1978 was reflective of the increased planned investment under the 1977–81 development plan. An important aspect of the budget is the high degree of state participation in economic, social, and cultural affairs. In 1977, for example, nearly 60 percent of the total current budget went for social services, about one-third earmarked for education alone, a percentage that has held almost steady since independence.

By far the greater part of the government's ordinary revenue is provided by taxes. Tax receipts during the 1960s and 1970s have amounted to 85 to 90 percent of revenue, the largest part being supplied by indirect taxes. State-owned enterprises that are profitable are sources of revenue for the central government. Public enterprises generally operate on their own funds plus investment funds transferred from the central government. Management of unprofitable public enterprises is often reorganized in an effort to improve their financial situation.

The system of taxation is complex, and the tax structure is modified annually to accommodate the needs of the development plan. If projected receipts are smaller than planned expenditures, certain taxes are raised or new ones are added, although care is taken to ensure that the new fiscal measures do not fall disproportionately upon lower income groups. For example, in 1977 higher income taxes were imposed on persons in upper income brackets as well as on real estate transactions. Among the various indirect taxes in effect in the late 1970s were customs duties, a production tax, a consumption tax, excise taxes, and a service tax. Customs duties are levied on most imports, although an import tax surcharge that is applied to most commodity categories is not applied to essential items. Special export duties are levied on certain products, such as olive oil and minerals. The production tax is applied to all domestic manufactures and to imported commodities and is levied at a flat rate on the wholesale price. The consumption tax applies only to selected products and is levied at one of three rates. Excise taxes are imposed only on specific products, such as petroleum and beverages. There are also stamp taxes on a number of documents and registration taxes on various corporate activities.

Direct taxes include levies on business profits, which also apply to certain self-employed individuals, such as lawyers and doctors; an individual income tax; and a professional income tax that is assessed against noncommercial individuals and companies. An agricultural property tax is paid on the basis of an assessed value of certain crops and products, and an agricultural income tax is levied at a flat rate on the gross sales of agricultural products. Dividends and interest are taxed as well as inheritances. The rate for the inheritance tax is based upon the degree of relationship between the testator and the legatee and increases for the more distant relatives or those without blood ties.

Local and municipal governments are financed partly from their own sources of income and partly by the central government. In general, until 1975 the local administrations had only limited financial and economic autonomy, and many functions they could perform were funded through the current or capital budgets of the central budget and executed by the appropriate ministry or other central agency. Beginning in 1975 local governments were permitted to have an investment budget and to levy their own taxes. Local governments finance their own payrolls and public services, such as marketplaces, slaughterhouses, water supply, sanitation, lighting, and street maintenance as appropriate to the locality. Budgets are prepared annually by the governorates and municipalities and are voted upon by the governing councils. If they exceed a specified level, however, they must be approved by the Ministry of Finance.

Income for local budgets comes from charges for services, license fees, fines, subsidies from the central government—the

largest share, which represents revenue sharing of certain national taxes—and taxes the local governments are authorized to collect. The principal tax is that on real property, based on its assessed rental value. Local governments also collect taxes on vacant lots, taxes to support building maintenance and sanitation inspections and services, and a slaughterhouse tax. Other sources consist of income earned by city-owned land and buildings and from concessions.

Balance of Payments and Public Debt

From independence through 1968 the balance of payments experienced continuous and sometimes increasing deficits, and the government had to rely upon foreign exchange credits and grants from other countries and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). From 1969 through 1974 the balance of payments recorded surpluses, which in some years—such as 1973 and 1974—were rather large. Small deficits occurred in 1975 and 1976, and a fairly large deficit was recorded in 1977. In general the country has experienced an annual trade deficit that is often offset by services and capital inflow.

Export demand and prices have fluctuated widely while imports have held to a steady annual increase. The foreign trade deficits, however, are not a completely accurate indicator of the stability of the overall economy. The larger deficits occurred in years when imports of industrial goods for development projects were greatest. In turn, these deficit years were followed by periods of relatively large increases in the gross national product (GNP). There are a number of factors that account for the country's limited ability to export. These factors are not peculiar to the Tunisian economy but are typical of many developing countries. As part of its attempt to reduce imports, higher taxes were imposed in 1978 on imports of luxuries and certain other goods. In some cases the increases were as high as 300 percent over previous rates.

In years of balance-of-payments surpluses, receipts from tourism, remittances from Tunisians working abroad, and new incoming capital are more than sufficient to cover the trade deficit. The equivalent of about US$100 million is estimated to be remitted annually by Tunisian workers abroad, most of whom are working in European countries. The tourist industry has become the leading source of foreign exchange, but in some years the growth rate of tourist receipts and workers' remittances cannot overcome the trade deficit. In 1977 when the deficit reached a record high, the country was forced to seek help from the IMF to bolster its rapidly dwindling foreign exchange reserves.

The total foreign debt outstanding at the end of 1977 was almost US$1.9 billion, more than triple the amount a decade earlier. Projections for the end of 1978 placed the debt at nearly US$2.5 billion, the increase required to cover the increased costs of investments to be made under the 1977–81 development plan and the balance-of-payments deficit. The debt servicing ratio, which is

the measure of the percentage of annual exports required to meet the principal, interest, and other charges on the foreign debt, dropped slowly from 23 percent in 1967 to 8.8 percent in 1976. However, because of increased borrowing in the late 1970s, the debt burden was expected to rise to over 15 percent by 1981. Since independence it has been clear that if the government wanted to maintain a sustained development program, it would have to rely heavily on long-term credits and loans. To enhance its international borrowing position the government has been obliged to do its utmost to maintain the stability of the overall economy and, interrelatedly, the value of the dinar.

Foreign Aid

Tunisia has received foreign aid from a variety of sources since its independence in 1956. The list of suppliers is a long one and includes foreign governments, international organizations, and foreign banks. The country has been successful in obtaining aid for a number of reasons: the stability and continuity of the central government, a good record of managing its foreign debt, and its ability to meet the challenge posed by relatively scarce resources and a growing population. The long list of donors makes for numerous aid relationships with varying procedures, but fortunately Tunisia has been able to manage its aid programs in a fairly well-developed manner. The Consultative Group on Development Assistance to Tunisia, chaired by the World Bank (see Glossary), meets periodically to review the country's economic progress, problems, and assistance needs. The group consists of representatives from various governments and international lending agencies.

The United States has been the most important single source of aid since independence, including grants, loans, and guaranteed credits. The United States foreign aid program to Tunisia has been in operation since 1957 and by the end of 1976 had accounted for US$850 million of the more than US$2.2 billion received from all sources during that period. The largest single form of American aid has been food shipments paid for in Tunisian dinars or as grants under the Food for Peace Program. France is the second most substantial supplier of aid, and on a per capita basis more French aid is given to Tunisia than to any other country in the world. France's assistance fell off for a few years after 1964 because of a dispute over Tunisia's nationalization of land held by French colonists. Relations later improved, and aid was once more resumed. A further dispute over frozen French bank accounts in Tunisia dating from 1959 was resolved in 1975, opening the way for more French aid.

Assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) is in the form of long-term capital credits and loans for specific projects. Increased economic aid is only one part of an overall expansion in West German-Tunisian foreign economic relations. Increased West German imports led to a greater re-

sponse in assistance, which in turn further stimulated additional exports to Tunisia. Italian aid has basically been similar to the West German pattern, with the exception that most of its loans are related to the oil industry. A growing percentage of aid comes from the World Bank and its related agencies. The World Bank Group's loans have been mainly for long-term investment in infrastructure and social development, such as water supplies, urban planning, education, transportation, power, agriculture, and industry.

In addition to Western sources Tunisia has turned to Arab and communist nations as alternative sources of aid, particularly since 1975. Kuwait has been an important source in the Arab world since 1963 when it began to make a series of long-term, low-interest loans for capital purposes. Such loans went for electrification projects, irrigation, agricultural expansion, and gas pipelines. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq have also been forthcoming in providing funds for particular projects. Economic assistance from communist countries began in the 1960s, although not on the scale of their Western counterparts. Foremost among the communist states in providing aid have been the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. The terms of their loans compare equal to or more favorably than the majority of loans Tunisia has negotiated with Western countries and international organizations.

Beginning in 1977 Tunisia started to turn to foreign banks to finance its development program by borrowing on a commercial basis. It was successful in raising more than US$125 million in its first approach to a group of European banks. The African Development Bank has also been a source of numerous loans for miscellaneous projects. Aid has not been a one-way street, however. Tunisia has a small foreign assistance program of its own. For example, it is giving technical assistance to the Ivory Coast in developing that country's fruit and vegetable canning industry, and it has increased its economic and industrial cooperation with Senegal since 1975.

Foreign Investment

Since 1972 the climate for foreign investment in Tunisia has been excellent. Before then the nationalization in 1964 of foreign-owned lands and the lack of investment guarantees in the previous investment laws were chief reasons for a small rate of private foreign investment in the country. In 1972 a new investment code granted numerous concessions for export-oriented industries, and a 1974 code applied similar concessions for investments in domestic-oriented industries. The new codes reflect the government's conscious effort to encourage more foreign economic investment.

In addition to sponsoring the liberal investment codes, Tunisia was the first country to sign a World Bank International Investment Arbitration Agreement, which specifies compensation procedures in the case of nationalization. The favorable prospects for

both economic and political stability in Tunisia are in themselves factors encouraging additional overseas private investors to enter into Tunisian operations. Most of the new investments that were attracted by the 1972 investment code went into textiles and tourism, but the government was trying to encourage more investment in other industries. Successfully reflecting that endeavor was the fact that almost 40 percent of new investment in 1977 went into construction materials and over 20 percent into food processing. United States investments in Tunisia totaled about US$80 million as of 1976, but the total was expected to grow as more firms became aware of the favorable investment laws.

Banking, Credit, and Currency

The basic monetary unit is the Tunisia dinar, which replaced the Tunisian franc in 1968. The dinar is divided into 1,000 millimes and is a nonconvertible currency. Banknotes come in 1, 5, and 10 dinar and 500 millime denominations. Base metal or silver coins generally are in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 500 millimes and 1 dinar. In 1976 two new coins were minted, a gold 10-dinar piece and a silver 5-dinar coin.

The import and export of banknotes is strictly prohibited, and very few Tunisians dinars are traded abroad. The exchange rate between the dinar and the French franc is established on a daily basis using a complicated formula. The rate for certain other currencies, including the United States dollar, is obtained on the basis of the Paris exchange market rate between the French franc and those other currencies. Rates for currencies not established in this manner are set by the Central Bank of Tunisia (Banque Centrale de Tunisie). The exchange rate between the dinar and the dollar in mid-1978 was TD1 to US$2.47; US$1 equaled 409 Tunisian millimes.

The country's banking system dates from 1879, two years before the establishment of the French protectorate, when a monopoly of granting loans on gems and precious metals was given to a French national in Tunis by decree of the bey. To exercise the monopoly, the Franco-Tunisian Bank (still operating in the 1970s) was organized as a limited liability company. French banking interests opened branch houses or organized new ones in Tunisia after the protectorate was established, and strong financial ties between the governments and the business communities of Tunisia and metropolitan France developed. Control of monetary affairs in the country, including management of the currency, remained almost wholly in French hands and centered in Paris until 1958. Thereafter a series of agreements brought financial autonomy.

The banking system by 1978 consisted of the treasury, the Central Bank of Tunisia, eleven commercial deposit banks, two investment banks, two development finance companies, a postal checking system, the National Savings Fund, forty-five agricultural mutual credit banks, and several insurance companies. The treasury carries out certain banking functions for government

agencies and public enterprises. The Central Bank of Tunisia was established in 1958 as a state institution to take over the functions of the Bank of Algeria and Tunisia, which previously performed most of the functions of a central bank and was fiscal agent for the Tunisian government but followed monetary policy dictated by the Monetary Committee of the Franc Zone in Paris.

The Central Bank of Tunisia carries out the functions normally performed by most central banks. It is fiscal agent for the treasury and for the government's public entities and is responsible for issuing and regulating the country's currency. It has power to make advances to the commercial banks licensed to operate in the country and to the quasi-public specialized credit institutions. It is charged with responsibility for regulating the volume and cost of bank credit in accordance with the needs of economic development. Other functions include supervising the country's banking system, acting as custodian and manager of the country's monetary gold and official foreign exchange assets, administering the government's foreign exchange regulations, ensuring maintenance of an adequate liquid reserve against the bank credit outstanding in the banking system, and advising the government on financial and economic matters.

In the absence of a well-developed money market, the Central Bank's principal means of controlling the money supply is through changing the rediscount rates and prescribing liquidity and reserve ratios applicable to the commercial banks. To ensure liquidity, a certain percentage of short-term obligations have to be covered by vault or other quick assets. As a further requirement the commercial banks are required to hold in their portfolios government securities equal to at least 30 percent of their demand deposits. Since 1975 the Central Bank has been permitted to make loans for up to seven years to other institutions. Before then it was restricted to short-term loans, a situation that hindered long-range development plans.

The Tunisian Banking Company (Société Tunisienne de Banque—STB) is the country's leading commercial and investment bank and the most important single source of credit for development projects. The STB accounts for nearly one-third of total bank deposits and loans in the country. In addition to engaging in the usual commercial operations and in development banking through medium- and long-term loans, it also makes equity investments in new or expanding enterprises, primarily industrial. Founded in 1957, the STB is jointly owned by the state and private investors.

The Economic Development Bank of Tunisia (Banque de Développement Economique de Tunisie—BDET) is a development finance company that has become another important source of medium- and long-term loans for industry and tourism. In the mid-1970s it held about 40 percent of all loans to manufacturing and one-third of all credits to the tourist industry. Formerly

known as the National Investment Company (Société Nationale d'Investissement—SNI), which had been established in 1959, the name and functions were changed in 1973. It has increased its capability of mobilizing capital resources by being permitted to receive time deposits. Nearly one-third of BDET's equity is owned by the Tunisian government, another one-third by foreign shareholders, and the balance by private Tunisians and the International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group.

Established under its present charter in 1959 with partial government ownership, the National Bank of Tunisia (Banque Nationale de Tunisia—BNT) has earlier antecedents than the other specialized banks. It conducts all kinds of banking operations but was established primarily as a consolidation of several institutions that had dealt in agricultural credit since the early 1900s. The bank has branch offices throughout the country and reaches its customers, insofar as seasonal credit is concerned, through a growing network of local mutual credit funds. Under the protectorate the French farmers and a few wealthy Tunisian landowners formed the Agricultural Mutual Credit Fund. Credit facilities for the small Muslim farmers consisted chiefly of the Tunisian Provident Societies, which the colonial government created for the relief of poor farmers in time of hardship. Financed by the national treasury, these societies provided loans to farmers at reasonable rates and performed certain marketing functions, but they never had sufficient funds to meet the needs of the peasant farmers. Reforms since independence extended the mutual credit program. Not registered as banks, the mutual credit organizations are supervised by the BNT and operate as private cooperatives extending credit to their members. In another role the BNT is the agent for the government in administering the complex program of farm price subsidies.

The National Savings and Housing Fund is a specialized credit institution that accepts deposits from individuals for home construction. If the depositors maintain savings for a four-year period, the fund will give them a ten-year construction loan. The French introduced facilities for post office checking and savings accounts during the protectorate period; after independence these facilities provided an important form of banking service for many of the people who lived far from the branch offices of the commercial banks. Deposits are accepted from the public, the government, banks, and public enterprises.

Of the commercial banks chartered under Tunisian law, several are institutions that by consolidation have taken over the interests of foreign banking houses once active or represented by affiliates in the country. However, in order to make Tunisia attractive as a country suitable for foreign investment and as a haven for international banking facilities, a law was passed in 1976 permitting the establishment of foreign banks and other financial institutions,

provided they dealt only with nonresidents of Tunisia. By 1978 at least one foreign bank had already begun such operations. To serve as a channel for foreign loans to Tunisia and to make investments in other countries, several of the Tunisian commercial banks formed a joint bank, based in Paris and called the Tunisian Union of Banks.

A small dynamic stock exchange began functioning in Tunis in 1970. The exchange is steadily developing, and many companies have been able to raise needed capital through issuance of securities. Demand for securities often exceeds supply, and the prices quoted for existing securities sometimes rise rapidly.

Interest rates in the country were deliberately kept low for many years as government policy. An adverse effect of this policy was a lower savings rate and thereby an insufficient mobilization of national resources. In 1977, after a major survey of the structure of the interest rates, the central governmet revised all rates upward, hoping to attract additional savings but still not making loans too expensive.

Agriculture

Agriculture provides the income to support about one-half the population. In 1976 the government stated that about 800,000 people were gainfully employed in agriculture, 340,000 as farmers and the balance as workers. Realization of the full potential of the country's farmlands, however, is hampered by low-yielding, traditional farming practices, which still persist and are only beginning to give way to more productive modern techniques. The government has been increasing its investment in extension services and in the training of technicians, and significant numbers of farmers have received vocational training. Much of the cultivable land is in areas where rainfall is uncertain and may turn out to be so inadequate as to cause a virtual crop failure, which in turn affects the economic growth of the total economy. Experience and historical data indicate that in a cycle of five years there will ordinarily be one excellent crop, two fair crops, and two poor crops.

Food is by far the greater part of the agricultural output, and except in poor years the country's basic food requirements are very nearly satisfied by domestic production. Wheat and barley are the critical staples that have to be imported in sizable quantities whenever there is a poor crop year. Years of low agricultural production not only reduce the revenue from exports but also increase the expenditures for imports.

Land Use, Tenure, and Reform

Of the total land area of 16.2 million hectares, the amount that is considered arable varies according to sources and estimates. The percentage is fairly high for an arid country; estimates range from 6.5 million to over 9 million hectares, the balance being wooded or unproductive, such as deserts, salt flats, and beaches. Of the arable land anywhere between 3.1 million and 3.3 million hectares

Olive grove near Safaqis
Courtesy Roloc Color Slides, Washington, D.C.

were under some form of cultivation in the 1970s, although in 1977 the minister of agriculture claimed that only 3 million hectares of land were under cultivation in that year. The balance of the arable land is in uncultivated pastures or is being held fallow. A very high percentage of the land actually under cultivation is planted to cereals and tree crops.

A complete cadastre of the country has never been done. Only partial surveys have been made with property titles issued by the land registrar. Properties without titles receive a title of possession, which is not as negotiable as a property title. As much as one-half of the arable land is believed not to have clear titles. After many years of attempts at an agrarian reform program, the landholdings in the late 1970s ranged from small to immense. As little as 3 percent of the number of farms accounted for about one-half of the cultivated land, and this percentage was almost evenly divided into state-owned farms and large private farms.

The agricultural utility of land is sharply affected by terrain and weather. Everywhere but in the alluvial valleys of the north, the soil is dry, sandy, and frequently saline. Temperatures are high, and rainfall is scarce over most of the country. Five more or less distinct agricultural regions may be discerned on the basis of prevalent crops. The banks of the Majardah River in the north, blessed with high rainfall and the country's most fertile soil, are prime grain land and also support livestock. The rest of the northeast, including Cape Bon—the peninsula east of Tunis—is well suited to growing fruits and vegetables. Most of the citrus fruit, grapes, and vegetables come from this area. The eastern plateau region along the coast between Susah and Safaqis and the area on and near Jarbah has dry, sandy soil ideal for olive culture. The central hinterlands support only subsistence farming but produce large quantities of wild esparto grass, a base material for paper and cordage. The oases on the southern desert fringes produce olives, vegetables, dates, and palm by-products, such as fronds, used in handicraft weaving.

Of the land under cultivation in the 1970s, more than one-half was farmed by traditional methods. Traditional agriculture was marked by a heavy dependence on hand labor or at best the use of draft animals, including the camel, for plowing and hauling. Farm implements and equipment were rudimentary, and little use was made of crop rotation, fertilizers, or even such primitive soil conservation techniques as terracing. Most of the small traditional farmers were displaced from the more productive areas by the Europeans during the protectorate era and are consequently working land that is of only marginal value unless improved by irrigation or other means.

The circumstances of the small farmer vary with the region where he lives and the crop he grows. Income is generally higher in the north, with its greater rainfall and emphasis on cash crops, than in the center and south, where lands are dryer and agricul-

ture—primarily in grains—depends almost entirely on weather conditions. A comparatively small number of farmers, most of them in olive culture, are fairly well off and can employ seasonal labor when needed. The average cereal farmer can employ laborers only in good years, paying them in kind. At a lower level are those whose holdings are so small or poor that they cannot live by their own produce and must seek outside work as day or seasonal laborers at the olive presses, at herding, or in whatever jobs they can find. A drought year reduces most of this class to penury. Sharecropping and tenant farming are also common practices in the traditional sector.

The seminomad of the steppes is little better off than the small sedentary landholder. Pasturage is poor, his techniques of breeding are archaic, and as a consequence his yields of meat and wool are low and of inferior quality. Even under these conditions the seminomad may be nearly self-sufficient by virtue of his small requirements for subsistence. Such income as is necessary can be earned by gathering esparto grass, making handicrafts, or hiring out his camels for transport.

Irrigation is important to the economy; in some areas only a few millimeters less of rainfall can cause the loss of the harvest, and in others the rainfall pattern is so irregular that the entire annual amount can come down within a period of a few days and cause floods and soil erosion. Nonetheless, the government largely ignored irrigation schemes for many years and left it up to individual farmers to install water channels and wells. It has been only since the late 1960s that the government began to invest larger sums of money in irrigation projects. The value of irrigation is spelled out by the fact that in the early 1970s the small percentage of land that was under irrigation was providing as much as 20 percent of total farm production. Further, most of the irrigated land has been planted in crops that bring higher prices in the market.

All water resources in the country fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture. In order to preserve the national use of the limited water supply, three master water plans covering the north, central, and southern parts of the country were being prepared and implemented, the North Tunisia Water Master Plan being the most advanced as of 1978. That plan is a long-range project, involving the building of several dams and related facilities to develop irrigation and electricity and to supply drinking water to the coastal towns. Development of water resources, however, is limited by the amount and quality available. In 1977 it was estimated that a maximum of about 220,000 hectares of land could be suitably irrigated, and about 132,000 hectares were then under some form of irrigation, of which 45,000 hectares were in public irrigation projects and the large balance under private irrigation. In the Sahara some 16,000 hectares are under irrigation around oases. It is believed that enough water exists deep under

the desert for much more cultivation, but the costs of investment to develop the supply may outweigh the value of the crops that would be produced.

Erosion caused by violent desert rainstorms, windborne sand and clay, seasonal rivers, and overgrazing is estimated to destroy over 10,000 hectares of land annually. In an effort to eliminate these losses the government has emphasized reforestation and soil conservation programs. A decree of 1958 made it obligatory to contour-plow all planted slopes of more than 2 percent incline and to plant trees on at least 2 percent of each farm.

Land drainage operations have centered in the northern coastal region. Marshes totaling 1,800 hectares along the Gueniche River in the governorate of Banzart and 6,000 hectares on the Haouaria Plain in Cape Bon have been reclaimed for agricultural use. Along the southern coast in the vicinity of Qabis and Madaniyin, salt lakes totaling 1,800 hectares were in the process of being drained and the land desalinated.

An agrarian reform program that was characterized as being one of the most complex land reform programs in the Middle East was instituted after independence but was largely undone in a short period of time in late 1969 when the government suddenly reversed its policy. Certain forms of tenancy that existed before independence, however, have been eliminated while others have resurfaced. The heart of the reform program was the formation of agricultural cooperatives, but effective landowner and small farm operator opposition to bringing all land into the cooperative movement brought down the whole system and caused the fall from grace of Ahmed Ben Salah, the secretary of state for planning and finance and an ardent supporter of President Bourguiba's desire to liberate the peasants from ignorance, poverty, and backwardness (see Major Political Developments, ch. 4).

A complicated system of land tenure existed when the French protectorate began, and much of it was still in existence at the end of the 1970s, with some changes. Some land was privately owned, mostly by the bey or a few important families. Privately owned land is called *melk* land, and the owner has the right to dispose of it by sale, gift, or inheritance. Subject for centuries to the Muslim law of equal inheritance among heirs, *melk* land became highly fragmented and was held in joint ownership with uncertain title. Collectively owned tribal property, called *arch* land, found largely in the southern half of the country, gives the individual a right to share in the use of the land held by the village or tribe. The *arch* land is managed by elected councils for the benefit of members of the group. As a result of the land reform program, some collective land may be claimed by individuals and transformed into individually owned *melk* land.

Another kind of property holding, which represented most of the land tenure arrangements before the French arrived, was the *habus* (similar to the *waqf* in the Arab East). An old Islamic

institution, the *habus* was a foundation from which the revenues were dedicated in perpetuity for a charitable purpose. Establishment of a *habus* was an irrevocable legal transaction, and property so endowed could not be expropriated and was inalienable. Any landowner, regardless of his kind of holding, whether *melk* or *arch* land, could render his estate inalienable to prevent either squandering by his heirs or confiscation by the government by transforming his land into a private *habus*. Private *habus* land was still used by the original tenants or their descendants, who paid a yearly rent to the religious institution. Although *habus* land was inalienable in principle, the French authorized the transfer of public *habus* lands in 1898, after which date considerable areas changed hands. The area in public *habus* land was estimated to have declined from hundreds of thousands of hectares to less than 20,000 hectares by independence. After independence steps were taken to make more land available. As *habus* land was considered to be wasteful in production methods, the small remainder of public *habus* land was nationalized in 1956 and eventually was redistributed to state farms or was sold to private operators. Private *habus* land was abolished in 1957, and the individuals who would have otherwise inherited it became the proprietors of the land. Disputes immediately arose among the descendants involved, and many of them still had not been resolved by the government as of 1978.

The system of landownership hindered acquisition of land by European colonists after the protectorate was established in 1881. The French met the situation by inducing the bey to decree in 1885 the registration of title under French law, with specification of full details as to location and size of property. Land so registered came under the jurisdiction of the French courts. The certificates of title issued under this system wiped out previous claims, and to be valid all future transactions had to be inscribed on the certificate. The new law provided legal means for private acquisition of land by Europeans, who were generally able to get claims settled quickly in their favor. Thousands of Tunisian farmers also acquired land, but their farms were small in comparison with those of the French, Italian, and Maltese settlers.

Other legislative measures made large amounts of land available cheaply to the French colonists. In 1890 it was decreed that all uncultivated bush lands were classified as state forests. Land not suitable for reforestation was made available for sale to the colons. This action was disastrous for the nomad animal raisers of the country because much of the land sold to the Europeans had traditionally been available to them for grazing purposes. The nomads were forced to graze their animals on less suitable land, and the erosion of this marginal land was greatly increased. By independence some 4,000 European farmers owned some 850,000 hectares of farmland, about 5,000 Tunisian farmers owned sizable holdings and operated modern farms as did the Europeans, and

some 450,000 Tunisians owned or leased small properties and depended on subsistence farming and traditional methods of operation.

Both before and after the period of agrarian reform a wide variety of tenant relationships existed. The most common method of tenancy encountered used to be that of a fixed rental paid for the land for a specific period of time. An increasingly prevalent arrangement has been share-tenancy, under which the landlord receives a share of the crop—usually one-third—in return for participating in the costs of preparing the land. If the landlord does not participate, his share is less. An unusual aspect of sharecropping in Tunisia, particularly in the north, is the increasing number of small individual farmers who are renting their land under a sharecropping arrangement to much larger private operators. By the use of modern technology the large farmer can maximize crop production, and thereby the small farmer's income goes up without his having to work the land himself.

The massive rush into the cooperative program had its origin in the period after independence. From 1956 until 1964 the state had been acquiring European-owned farmland that had been either abandoned or sold to the government, although some land held by French owners was confiscated in 1961 during the Bizerte crisis. These holdings were then either operated as state farms or increasingly turned into cooperatives for the benefit of the former workers on the estates. These actions created a lack of confidence among the remaining European landowners, and a decrease occurred in farm investment and production, which the government attempted to counteract in 1963 by guaranteeing ownership for at least five more years. In May 1964, however, a law was suddenly passed nationalizing all farmland still held by foreigners. The state, in an attempt to manage the larger amounts of land that it had acquired, resorted increasingly to the formation of cooperatives.

The historical basis for the government role was the necessity, after the French withdrawal, of maintaining essential supplies of nourishment to the populace and of surpluses to the established export markets. Equally, there was the desire on the part of those whose opposition to the protectorate arrangement had been carried out on egalitarian principles to institute their beliefs at the grass-roots level with a reform of the land tenure system. The method chosen to fulfill these goals was the cooperative, launched after careful studies to determine its feasibility. From a practical standpoint, the cooperative supplied a framework in which land could be consolidated, workers strictly organized, and management by agricultural technicians maintained as under the French estate system but with nominal ownership of the land, a share in the profits, and the right to eventual control of it resting with the members. Through their function as training and demonstration centers, the cooperatives were foreseen as the prime means of

raising the rural population from the subsistence sector to the modernizing sector of the economy.

Between 1963 and 1969 new legislation had put in place the elements of a comprehensive land reform program centered on cooperative agriculture. The philosophy behind the cooperative movement was transformation of the values and habits of rural residents by training them in modern farming methods through cadres of technicians and managers sent to administer the farms. Decisionmaking was to be taken out of the hands of the farmers and placed in the hands of the government, and it was on this point that the movement foundered. A 1967 cooperative statute called for a transformation of all farmland in the country into cooperatives, private farmers becoming members of the cooperative, most of them against their wishes. The government never anticipated the opposition that resulted nor knew of the incompetence of the farm managers and the losses incurred on the farms until after late 1969, when the entire cooperative movement was abandoned on orders of President Bourguiba. At the height of the movement in September 1969 almost all the farmland in the country—about 92 percent—had come under state control and was in cooperatives.

Based upon later analysis of social scientists, it appears that so much local resistance to the implementation of cooperative policies was encountered that coercion by the authorities was necessary. The actual extent of coercion during the cooperative period was not adequately reported at the time and was made known only afterward. It appears that farmers were threatened, sabotage occurred, and physical violence erupted between villagers and police backed by army units in many areas, particularly in the Sahil. During the two-year period of forced cooperativization between 1967 and 1969 farm output fell, most farms operated at a loss, and management was generally incompetent. The officials administering the cooperatives had little or no agricultural training and were mainly bureaucrats who continually falsified production figures in their reports to superiors who in turn never checked on the true situation on the farms. It was later revealed that the profit per hectare on many cooperatives was actually less than the profit made by the small farmers using traditional methods before their land became part of the cooperative.

After September 1969 farmers were given the option of remaining with the cooperative or taking their farm out of it and returning to private ownership. By January 1970 most famers had chosen the option of returning to farming their own land. The cooperative movement still exists, albeit on a much smaller scale and on a voluntary basis. In 1977 there were only an estimated 350,000 hectares of farm cooperatives on state-owned land. There were an additional 126,000 hectares in state farms, but they were not being operated as cooperatives. Most of the existing cooperatives were in areas of public irrigation projects where average per capita income was higher than in other rural areas.

Agricultural land that is irrigated by public water projects also falls under special agrarian reform laws that specify maximum and minimum landholdings permitted for each area. A land reform agency was created in 1977 as a self-governing entity under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture to deal only with irrigated land. It can expropriate or purchase irrigated land in excess of the prescribed amount. Expropriated land may be paid for in cash or in land elsewhere. The Land Reform Agency may also consolidate and exchange property between farmers to obtain the maximum use of irrigation projects.

Crops and Livestock

In terms of land sown to crops, cereals predominate, particularly in the north. Wheat and barley are the major cereal crops, accounting for as much as 97 percent of annual tonnage. Oats, corn, and sorghum make up the remaining percentage. Wheat is grown by all farmers—large, small, and subsistence. Wheat growing on a large scale was done originally by European settlers because its cultivation is easy to mechanize and because it is a nonperishable crop. While mechanization greatly expanded the area under cultivation, it tended to increase the harmful effects of erosion because many soils were being overexploited and virgin foothills were being stripped of cover to permit more wheat growing. The high dependence by many farmers upon a single crop—wheat—is of concern to the government, which desires more crop diversification. Still, cereal production in most years does not meet domestic needs, and much wheat has to be imported.

Roughly four-fifths of the annual wheat crop is of durum or hard wheat, which when milled yields semolina, the basic ingredient of pastas such as spaghetti and of the standard Tunisian dish, couscous. Annual production of soft wheat, which is used in breadmaking, is rarely sufficient to meet the demand. To a limited degree the high-yielding new strains of Mexican soft wheat have been adapted to certain areas of Tunisia. However, Mexican wheat requires much care in its cultivation, and thus only the most modern of farms can profit from its introduction. Barley, which is distinguished by its hardiness under dry conditions, is important to farmers in central and southern Tunisia where there is less rainfall. The National Cereals Office purchases and markets all cereals, sets producers' prices, and provides extension services, seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides to farmers at subsidized prices.

Another large percentage of arable land is planted to olive trees. The olive tree is well suited to the Tunisian climate because it can survive long periods of drought. An essential feature of olive culture is the irregularity of the yield. Production varies widely from year to year depending upon rainfall and care, and seldom are there two good years in a row. Traditionally, ownership of olive holdings is based on trees, not on the land itself. Each generation an owner's trees are divided among all his heirs, a practice that greatly fragments holdings. One farmer can own

trees separated by several miles or share title to a single tree with several others. The system discourages capital improvements to the olive groves and in many cases makes adequate care impossible. The government has therefore sought to reform practices in the olive industry, a move that has met with considerable opposition from the relatively wealthy growers. Because the olive industry accounts for about one-half of total agricultural employment, the government is sensitive to changes in the industry. A government survey showed that between 5 million and 9 million of the 54 million olive trees in the country were yielding too little to justify further cultivation. An extensive program for pruning, root pruning, and removing underproductive trees was to be undertaken, but popular opposition was magnified by the fact that seedling olive trees require thirty years to reach full production, and root-pruned trees need seven years to recover their yield after treatment.

Tunisia is in most years Africa's largest producer of olive oil. It is the country's main agricultural export but has been meeting competition in world markets from less expensive vegetable oils and from restrictive quotas imposed by traditional trading partners. In some years domestic stocks of unsold olive oil have been built up. A ban on the import of other oilseeds in the late 1970s helped to increase domestic consumption of olive oil and worked down the unsold stocks to a manageable level by 1978.

Before large-scale vineyards were introduced by the Europeans in the nineteenth century, the relatively small areas of land planted to grapes produced the fruit for table use, wine being forbidden to Muslims. By independence vineyards covered much of Cape Bon and the northern coastal hills. Wine was produced almost entirely for export, France being the traditional market. Until 1964 wine earned one-seventh of Tunisia's export revenue and stood third on its list of exports. After the nationalization of French lands in 1964, the preferential trade agreement with France was permitted to expire, and Tunisia forfeited the French wine market completely. Production fell steadily, and new markets were hard to establish. The policy since then has been to reduce the amount of land in vineyards. The best land is replanted in other crops, while vines in the remaining vineyards are improved to yield better quality grapes.

Citrus fruit production is a recent but rapidly expanding industry. The first large commercial groves were planted by Europeans when Spanish citrus output declined during the mid-1930s. The major citrus fruit areas are between Tunis and Cape Bon and in the vicinities of Nabul and Al Hammamat. Most orchards are small—90 percent are under ten hectares—but, being irrigated, are capable of steady production and are not drastically affected by drought. Nearly one-half the annual output is exported to Europe, and the remainder goes either to the domestic market or to the growing food processing industry.

Date production is of prime importance to persons residing in the southern oases around Qabis, Madaniyin, and Qafsah, where groves of date palms offer the only possibility of commercial agriculture. Dates have a high nutritional value and in drought years serve as a staple—sometimes as the only food—for much of the human and animal population on the desert edge. In average years more than 75 percent of the crop is consumed within the country, pits and inferior varieties being used as animal fodder. Superior strains are exported. Numerous date farmers have begun to adopt modern techniques of cultivation, and processing plants have been built at several oases. Agronomists have calculated that as little as one hectare of land in an oasis, if properly cultivated with a mix of dates and fruits, could generate a fairly large annual income for a farm family.

Vegetable cultivation includes items essential to the native diet—chick-peas, eggplant, artichokes, broad beans, turnips, and peppers—and enough of the more common European table vegetables to support a small export industry. Truck gardening has long been established on the northern and central coastal plains. Products exported to Europe include potatoes, tomatoes, artichokes, peas, and carrots. A network of experimental and demonstration farms has been established east of Tabarqah along the north coast to disseminate knowledge of advanced methods to the farmers of the area. Increased vegetable output is desired both for the domestic market and for export. Tunisia's warm climate, combined with early-ripening vegetable strains, gives it the opportunity of exporting profitably to European fresh produce markets in advance of the northern season.

Sugar beet production has been expanding rapidly. Sugar beets are grown in the northwest, where the government hopes to stimulate production to meet as much as one-half of the national sugar requirements by 1985. In the mid-1970s sugar production met only a small percentage of domestic requirements, and large imports were necessary. Tobacco is grown but in insufficient quantities to meet domestic demand. Small amounts of cotton were grown until 1977, when a cotton expansion program was launched by the government on state farms to meet the needs of the growing textile industry, which was having to import its raw materials. Figs, pears, apricots, apples, peaches, plums, cherries, and almonds are other crops that are grown profitably by Tunisian farmers.

Sheep are the predominant livestock, numbering well over 3 million head in normal years. The number of cattle is increasing, while herd sizes of goats and camels are decreasing. There has been a large increase in poultry production. Rainfall is the critical variable in animal husbandry because most animals depend upon grazing. During years of drought many animals either die in the fields or are sent to slaughterhouses before their time. The government is encouraging farmers to grow crops for the production

of fodder, and attempts are under way to improve the quality of the herds. Breeding stock is imported, but one difficulty in upgrading the livestock quality is the scarcity of veterinarians. The profession ranks very low in social prestige, and few Tunisian students become veterinarians.

Fishing and Forestry

Including dependents, an estimated 20,000 Tunisians are supported by fishing activities. The industry is growing, and production rose from 37,000 tons in 1967 to over 53,000 tons in 1977. The fishing fleet in the late 1970s consisted of 175 trawlers and over 5,000 small coastal boats of all descriptions. Most of these craft were old, not motorized, and in need of constant repair. A government-financed modernization program is expected to help many fishermen acquire new vessels, and a large number of small fishing ports are being constructed along the coast to stimulate the industry further. Eighty-five percent of the fishing operations were centered in only three areas; near Safaqis and the Qarqannah Islands, off Susah and Al Mahdiyah, and on the island of Jarbah. Lesser activity took place near Qabis and Bizerte and on Cape Bon.

The National Fishing Office has the responsibility for supervision and development of the industry. It owns part of the trawler fleet, has broad powers over investment in the industry, and carries out scientific exploration and charting of Tunisia's offshore waters. The office also helps train fishermen in the use of modern vessels and equipment and operates freezing plants and a distribution network for fresh fish to inland markets. This latter activity has stimulated an increased consumer demand for fish. Because Tunisian fishing waters have not been fully exploited, the country signed an agreement with Italy in 1976 permitting a limited number of Italian trawlers to fish in Tunisian waters in exchange for an annual payment.

The country does not have many forests. Only about 800,000 hectares are classified as being in forests; of these about 296,000 hectares are actually wooded, mainly pine, oak, cork oak, and eucalyptus. Firewood production is the major output of the forest industry, followed by timber and cork production. Esparto grass grows wild in the steppes and is collected and used as a raw material for the small paper industry and for cordage. Supplying esparto grass is becoming more difficult, however, because it can only be harvested in a short period of time and has to be stored for use for the rest of the year, thereby increasing operating costs. Further, there is a shortage of workers in the esparto growing areas to gather the grass and transport it to the railheads.

Industry

Of all the sectors of the economy, industry has had the greatest economic growth since 1956. The government has enacted legislation favorable to industrial development and has taken the lead in

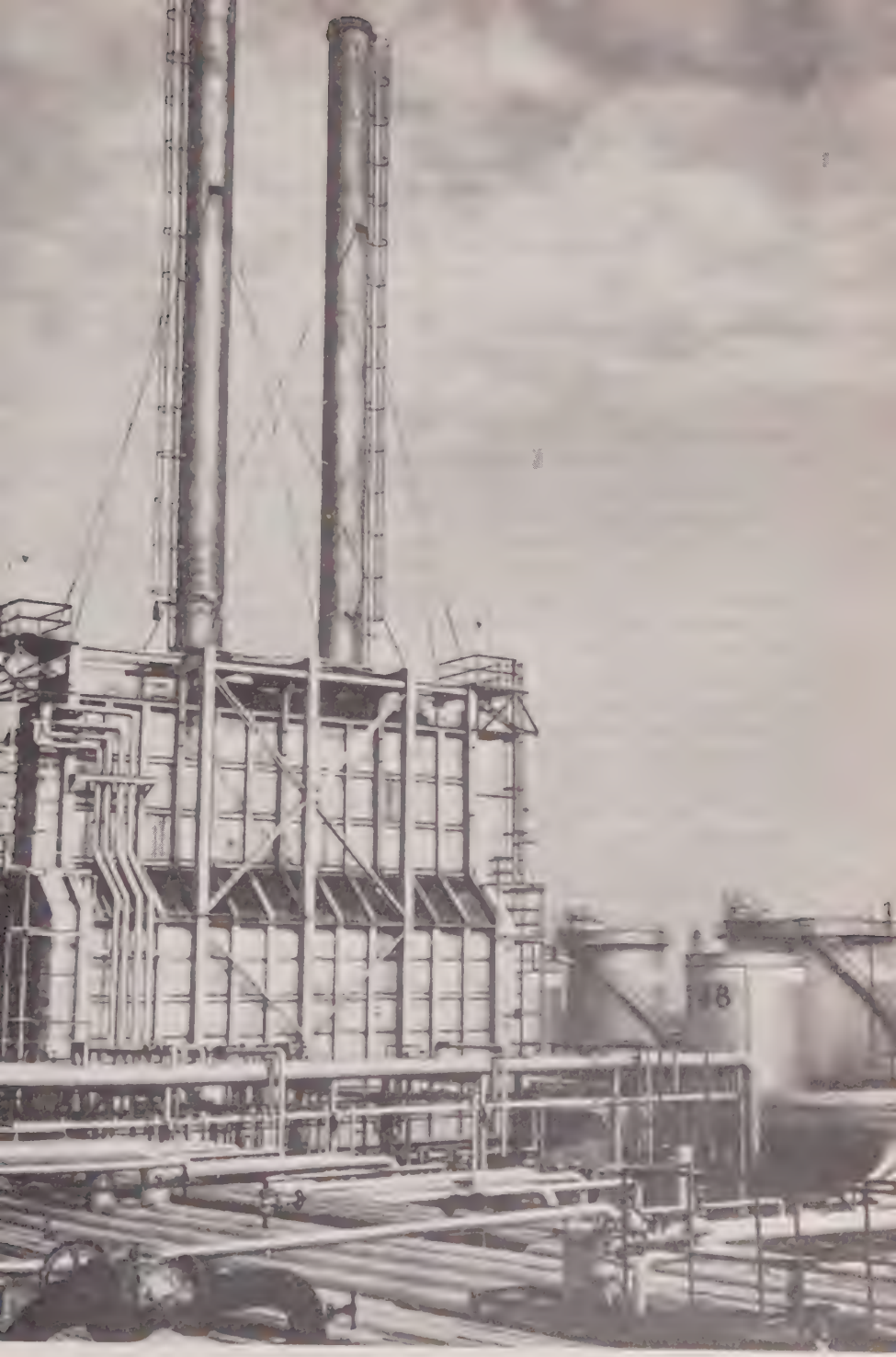
industrial investment. Major reasons for the increasing role played by industry have been the support given it by the government and the increased demand for capital and consumer goods. The further development of modern industry, however, is still hampered by restricted domestic markets and shortages of power resources, investment capital, and skilled labor. Mineral resources are scarce, but those that are exploited—especially phosphates and petroleum—make major contributions to the industrial sector. Manufacturing revolves around import substitution and processing of locally found raw materials. Handicraft industries still operate throughout the country.

Industry depends heavily on investment capital from foreign sources, official and private, and on credits from foreign suppliers, as well as some raw materials and technical assistance. France and other Western countries have helped fulfill these needs, and some aid has also come from communist countries. The government, stressing the importance of industry for national development, has encouraged foreign investors and has itself become a principal industrial investor and lender.

Hydrocarbons

Tunisia's hydrocarbon industry is young and small but important to the economy because of the foreign exchange it earns and its use as a base for industrialization. Total Tunisian petroleum production is less than 1 percent of Middle East production. The first production of crude oil began in 1966 at the Al Burmah (El Borma) oil field, which sits astride the Tunisian-Algerian border. The two governments agreed in 1972 that two-thirds of the production from the field would be considered Tunisian and the remainder Algerian, all production being transported jointly to the Tunisian seaport of As Sukhayrah for export. A second field came into production in 1968 at Ad Dulab about 200 kilometers north of Al Burmah and a small third field in the same year at Tamesmida. In 1972 a field at Sidi Litayen started production, but all of the mainland oil fields are dwarfed by the deposits that are said to exist offshore in several places in the Gulf of Gabes. Full exploitation of the offshore fields was being deferred because of a dispute with Libya over the extension of their border into the oil field area. In 1976 the two countries took their dispute to the International Court of Justice at The Hague (see Maghribi Relations, ch. 4).

The Al Burmah field began to experience loss of pressure in 1972, and output started to drop. Because full utilization of the offshore fields was being deferred, expensive water injection techniques were being attempted in 1977 and 1978 in an effort to revive the falling production at Al Burmah. Although it has petroleum and exports most of it, Tunisia actually has to import heavy crude oil for its own needs. The need to increase the export of its light-density petroleum therefore was crucial to compensate for the costly imports of heavy-density oil. The government holds a 50-percent interest in the company exploiting the Al Burmah



The Bizerte refinery
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

field, but all of the other oil fields are being operated either by private firms or by companies under agreements in which the state has a small interest. Tunisia's oil policies are more liberal than those of many other oil-producing countries. Exploration agreements with private oil companies can be converted easily into exploitation agreements if oil is found, and there is little intervention into the activities of the private oil companies. There is a state oil company called the Tunisian Company for Petroleum Activities (Enterprise Tunisienne d'Activités Pétrolières—ETAP), but ETAP's activities were limited as of the late 1970s. In 1978 Tunisia was not a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), but it generally followed OPEC's pricing patterns.

The discovery of natural gas deposits has resulted from petroleum explorations. It has been found in several locations in four different general areas: Cape Bon, Al Burmah, Safaqis, and the Gulf of Gabes. The exact amount of natural gas reserves is unknown, but a 1975 estimate placed it at 60 billion cubic meters, which would be enough, if fully exploited, to meet domestic needs for several decades. An additional source of natural gas for Tunisia will come about as a result of an agreement in 1977 with Italy, which is funding the cost of a natural gas pipeline from Algeria through Tunisia to Italy. The sector of the pipeline crossing its territory will belong to Tunisia, and the country will receive a percentage of the gas transported in lieu of royalties.

Actual production of natural gas as of 1978 was limited, only the fields at Al Burmah and Sidi Abderrahmane on Cape Bon being exploited. The Sidi Abderrahmane field is used solely to supply the needs of the city of Tunis, and the gas is processed at a plant in Tunis for household uses. Plans existed, however, for substantially larger production in the future, particularly from the four deposits located in the Gulf of Gabes. A project was begun in 1978 to develop one of these offshore fields by 1981. When development is completed, the natural gas will be distributed to all the coastal cities and towns and will also be used as the raw material for various chemical products.

Mining

All minerals are state owned, although private concessions for their exploitation may be granted. The National Mines Office, founded in 1962, conducts research into mineral deposits that appear to be commercially exploitable and in some cases carries out the exploitation itself. As of 1978 Tunisia did not possess deposits of many minerals that were commercially exploitable. The main minerals were phosphate, iron ore, lead, zinc, fluoride, barite, and salt. The entire mining industry had been permitted to become inefficient and ill equipped until the surge in world prices for phosphates in the 1974–75 period. More investment funds were channeled into the mining sector under the fourth development plan (1973–76) than in the ten previous years.

The major mineral is phosphate, and Tunisia is one of the world's leading phosphate exporters, although the proportion of mined phosphate rock that is actually exported has been declining. Anxious to avoid reliance upon the export of a raw material with fluctuating prices, the country has been successfully building plants to process the phosphate into more valuable by-products. The quality of Tunisian phosphate rock, however, is lower than that of competitors, and mining costs, including excessive nonproductive labor, are higher. About 12,000 Tunisians were directly employed in the phosphate industry; but until the sharp rise in world prices for phosphate, the industry operated at a loss because the work force was being maintained as an indirect means of social welfare in regions of the country where gainful employment was rare. Until the late 1970s most of the phosphate production came from several mines in the Qafsah region of central Tunisia, but some of those mines were nearing exhaustion. Larger phosphate deposits near Sehib in the south were scheduled to come into production around 1980.

Surface iron ore deposits are abundant, particularly in the north and in the central area near the Algerian border. All mines are open pit, and the ore is high grade. At one time most of the production was exported, but beginning in the 1970s production was being deliberately cut back to reserve the ore for the growing domestic steel industry. Exports of iron ore have thus suffered accordingly. About a dozen lead mines were operating, but production depended on world markets for the metal. Lesser amounts of zinc, fluoride, and mercury are exploited. Increasing amounts of marble are quarried and meet most of the national demand. Salt, obtained by open-air evaporation of seawater by one company that was given a monopoly on its production in 1949, meets both domestic demand and export requirements.

Manufacturing and Construction

Manufacturing, formerly the smallest and least important sector of industry, has undergone the greatest expansion, particularly in import substitution and the processing of raw materials. A major problem, however, is low productivity and relative inefficiency in many enterprises, as they do not operate at full capacity. Many new industries have been developed, including textiles, paper, steel, vehicle assembly, and fertilizers and other phosphate derivatives. The government provides numerous tax and fiscal incentives, and a number of supporting institutions furnish help and assistance to new or expanding industries. Among the incentives are long-term low-interest loans and tax benefits. Companies producing solely for export receive additional tax breaks. Between 1972 and 1977 nearly 300 new projects had been set up under the terms of the various investment laws.

The Investment Promotion Agency, an autonomous institution, assists both domestic and foreign investors in speeding up licensing agreements and helps obtain financial assistance. It also carries

out promotions abroad on investment in Tunisia. The Industrial Land Agency, a subsidiary of the Investment Promotion Agency, acquires industrial landsites throughout the country except for Tunis and either rents or sells the land and buildings to industrial promoters for development and resale to enterprises at subsidized prices. Another agency controls new industrial sites in and around Tunis in a similar manner. Market studies, sectoral studies, and project feasibility studies for prospective investors are carried out by yet another government agency.

A manufacturing census published in 1973 indicated that there were over 1,100 establishments employing more than five persons. Of that number around 200 were fairly large, employing at least 100 workers each. There are an estimated 18,000 establishments with five or fewer emloyees. There are mostly craft enterprises or small workshops, but a considerable number of them are in such industries as food and beverages, metal products, and textiles. Although these small enterprises constitute such a large number, they were virtually ignored for many years by the government with regard to ease of obtaining credit and technical assistance, because they represented only a small percentage of total manufacturing sales. However, since they provide employment to a fairly large number of people, the government was taking a new look at them in the late 1970s, and special credit facilities were being set up and expanded to help the small shops modernize and grow.

Manufacturing is highly concentrated in Tunis, which has about one-half the total number of manufacturing establishments and about the same proportion of total industrial employment. Tunis accounts for a larger percentage of total production. In some branches of industry as many as 80 percent of the factories are located in Tunis. Certain other cities have regional concentrations of particular products, such as carpets in Al Qayrawan, ceramics in Nabul, and textiles in Al Munastir. In an effort to obtain a more even regional distribution of manufacturing away from Tunis and the coast, many of the newer industrial sites are being built in smaller cities of the interior, and the tax incentives increase in proportion to their distance from Tunis.

The food processing industry is considered the most important segment of manufacturing. It consists of many plants processing miscellaneous products, mainly for domestic consumption but with a growing number engaged in export sales of certain items, such as fruits and vegetables, olive oil, and canned fish. The cereal industry, which includes both grinding of grain and manufacture of related products, is government operated and consists of several dozen mills and plants. Olive oil, one of the country's traditional exports, and other olive by-products are processed in over 2,000 factories. About forty companies process fruits and vegetables, 95 percent being exported. Sugar is refined by two companies: a

private enterprise in Tunis that makes lump sugar and the government-owned Tunisian Sugar Corporation in Bajah.

Textiles constitute the second most important manufacturing industry after food processing. Government activity in modernization and consolidation of enterprises has converted textile production, once a substantial segment of the handicrafts sector, into part of the modern manufacturing sector. The industry consists of state-owned plants, private Tunisian factories, and foreign-owned ventures. The General Textile Industry Corporation (Société Générale de l'Industrie Textile—SOGITEX), one of the government-owned companies, dominates the industry; but there are many small- and medium-sized private firms. After a period of very rapid expansion, which fulfilled domestic needs, textile manufacturers turned to overseas markets. But they began to face serious export problems beginning in 1977 as a result of import quotas imposed by the European Economic Community (EEC, also known as the Common Market), the main market for Tunisian textiles.

Ancillary to textiles is the leather and shoe industry. The main tannery is government owned, but all leather products are made by private industry. Many kinds of shoes are produced but in relatively small numbers for domestic needs. An adequate supply of hides and skins is a perennial problem, and a large portion of the required materials must be imported.

In 1978 the steel industry consisted of one small government-owned mill, which made mostly iron rods for the construction industry, and a second steelworks that was scheduled to begin operations late in the year. This new plant should help meet domestic demand for other steel products. The steel industry is one of the few that operate at high capacity, but its prices are protected on the domestic market because they cannot compete with those of imported steel products.

Automotive assembly and parts manufacturing is one of the major import substitution industries. All assembly operations of automobiles, trucks, and buses are handled by one firm, the government-owned Tunisian Automobile Industry Corporation (Société Tunisienne d'Industrie Automobile—STIA) located at Susah. Two new assembly plants scheduled to become operational in late 1978 should increase annual production considerably. STIA has attempted to reduce its dependence on imported automotive parts by producing them domestically. Among such parts and equipment manufactured in Tunisia are batteries, spark plugs, and tires.

There is a growing chemical industry that is dominated by the production of fertilizers, which has received heavy government investment. State-owned and joint-venture chemical companies make such additional products as phosphoric acid, pesticides, detergents, pharmaceuticals, paints, and perfumes. Domestic pharmaceutical production supplies most of the state hospitals,

although some drugs are imported and repackaged for retail sale. The electrical industries include plants assembling or manufacturing television receivers, radios, sewing machines, lamps, and electrical equipment. A wide variety of mechanical equipment, such as boilers, radiators, and tools, is also made. Numerous small plants, sometimes only one or two in an entire industry, make miscellaneous household and industrial goods and help to reduce the number of imports.

To a large extent the construction industry is privately owned, and the number of large contractors with modern equipment is increasing, although few of them are large enough to handle major projects. Generally construction companies have a shortage of entrepreneurial talent, and foreign planners, consultants, and often foreign contractors have to be used on special projects. Besides housing, public works is the major area of concentration for the construction industry. The cement industry cannot keep up with demand, and costly imports are required. About 1 million tons of cement were being imported annually in the 1970s, and a crash program to increase the capacity of the domestic industry began in 1977. Numerous other construction materials, such as timber and glass, also must be imported.

Artisanry and handicrafts hold an important place in the economy because of the large number of people working their traditional trades. Exposure to different cultures and customs over the centuries has developed a distinctive and widespread handicrafts industry. Handicrafts can be divided into two sectors: the utilitarian and the artistic. The former is rapidly being made obsolete by imports and by the cheaper products of the modern domestic manufacturing sector. The latter is an important part of the economy, which government planners seek to preserve and promote for tourist and export purposes.

More than 100,000 people depend on handicrafts to provide for all or part of their livelihood. They work mostly on a family basis or in small workshops where the owner works along with his assistants. There are, however, some individuals who work independently and others, mostly women, who work at home either for themselves or for a manufacturer or trader. Many craftsmen still belong to organized guilds as they did centuries ago.

In 1959 the National Handicraft Office was established to operate handicrafts shops, to supervise the quality of products for export, to promote marketing at home and abroad, and to help form cooperatives of craftsmen. By 1978 the office owned and operated numerous workshops and retail stores in most towns that sold locally produced crafts of good quality at fixed prices. Dozens of cooperatives comprising several thousand members had also been formed. These cooperatives buy raw materials and sell the finished products. They help alleviate shortages of credit and supplies, which traditionally threaten the artisans.

The major handicraft products include textiles, rugs and carpets, pottery and ceramics, leather goods, brasswork, copperware, jewelry, embroidery, and wrought iron. Certain areas specialize in the production of particular items. Fine tunics are made at Qasr Hellal in the Sahil. Jarbah is noted for woolens and blankets, Al Qayrawan for carpets, and Nabul for table linen. The government has helped to make available more modern equipment and technical training for the weaving of carpets and rugs. A wool washing center, dye factory, rug finishing department, and training center have all been established on Jarbah. Modern equipment has also been acquired by the weavers of Al Qayrawan. More persons were employed in rug and carpet making than in the entire textile industry in the late 1970s.

Electricity

Since 1962, when seven foreign-owned utility companies were nationalized and integrated, the state-owned Tunisian Electric and Gas Company (Société Tunisienne de l'Electricité et du Gaz—STEG) has been responsible for the production and transmission of electricity and gas. About 10 percent of total electric production, however, is generated by large self-users like industrial plants and the phosphate mines. STEG's installed capacity in 1976 was 367,000 kilowatts, almost all of which was represented by thermal plants. Most sites suitable for hydroelectric production have already been developed; they totaled about 30,000 kilowatts of capacity in 1976. The actual hydroelectric output is subject to fluctuations in the availability of water.

STEG's early years were spent in trying to amalgamate into a single unit the various systems and personnel that it inherited. It then embarked on an expansion program. Several new gas turbine power plants were being installed in the late 1970s, and the company had plans to expand eventually to larger and more efficient steam turbine units. Industrial users are the biggest customers of electricity, followed by public and private lighting and power. Electricity is unevenly distributed; consumption is largely concentrated in the northern cities, but the government hopes to be able to electrify about 60 percent of the country by the end of 1981.

Nuclear energy has been studied as a new source of power for Tunisia. In 1965 the Tunisian Nuclear Studies Center was established near Tunis. Its projects under study include desalinization of seawater, detection and extraction of uranium from phosphates, and research in electronics and solar energy.

Foreign Trade

The government not only regulates foreign trade but is also the sole importer and exporter of certain products. Formerly, the commercial foreign trade sector was largely controlled by the French and to a much lesser degree by British and Maltese businessmen. Since independence and the subsequent large exodus of

foreigners, these traders have been replaced by Tunisian businessmen or state-run enterprises.

Recognizing that the country's import needs will continue to exceed its export capacity, the government enforces a host of regulations designed to limit imports and foster domestic production. The general policy is first to restrict imports of certain luxury goods; second to protect by means of tariffs on the newly developed import-substitution industries of the country; and third to give preferential treatment to most categories of capital investment products, such as machines and construction material.

In the export sector the government uses a series of tax incentives and credit allowances to foster the development of certain export industries, particularly light manufactures. In addition the government sponsors a number of yearly trade fairs as well as providing informational services to Tunisian and foreign businessmen.

Tunisia experiences growing annual trade deficits as imports far exceed exports. Exports increased from nearly TD100 million in 1970 to around TD395 million in 1977, but during the same period imports rose from around TD168 million to around TD757 million. Even in years when the volume of exports is higher than in the previous year, their total value may be down, as occurred in 1976 because world prices of major commodities fell. In a speech in 1977 the prime minister claimed that while the continual trade deficits were disturbing, they were necessary because of the need to import capital equipment for the growing economy.

The composition of Tunisia's exports is typical of many developing countries: a few important commodities, mainly raw or semiprocessed materials, and a longer list of minor products, some of which are growing in importance. The three main exports are petroleum, phosphates, and olive oil, which account for as much as 60 percent of total exports. Since 1973 crude oil has been the leading export. Phosphates experienced a boom in 1974 and 1975, but world prices leveled off afterward. Olive oil exports depend upon restrictive measures taken by Tunisia's trading partners in the EEC. Newer export products that have begun to show up are textiles, superphosphates (fertilizer), and phosphoric acid. Textile exports are the end result of the high degree of new investment in the textile industry since 1973, and the other two new exports are by-products of the phosphate industry that are being increasingly processed at home. Wine exports are no longer as important as previously. Wine exports formerly found their largest market in France but were greatly affected by the deterioration in trade with France, and winegrowers no longer enjoy a concentrated market anywhere.

The greater part of the country's imports consists of capital goods and raw materials and semifinished products. Capital goods—mainly machinery, iron and steel products, and construction materials—account for almost one-third of total imports.

Loading operations at the port of La Goulette
WORLD BANK PHOTO (Bill and Christine Graham)

Foodstuffs, particularly cereals, and consumer goods and fuels constitute other important categories. Luxury goods and nonessential consumer goods imports have been sharply curtailed.

For many years after independence France was the leading trading partner, not only because of the previous political and economic ties but also partially because French is the language of business in Tunisia, which gave an edge to French suppliers and buyers. France's relative share of total trade with Tunisia, however, has been steadily declining since 1964 after the dispute over compensation for the Tunisian nationalization of French colon lands. As a result the French government canceled preferential treatment on Tunisian products and commercial credits. Despite the later restoration of most of the preferences, trade relations have not recovered, as Tunisia has actively sought alternative trading partners. By 1976 Italy had moved into first place as the leading market for Tunisian exports with 21 percent of the total, followed by France with 17 percent. Italy was a major buyer of citrus products, phosphates, and petroleum. France, however, still overshadowed other suppliers of Tunisian imports with 32 percent of the total in 1976.

In recent years EEC countries other than France have rapidly expanded their trade relations with Tunisia. Besides Italy, West Germany has been the most important and is the third or fourth leading supplier and purchaser annually. West Germany's trade with Tunisia has grown because of West German willingness to extend special payments and credit arrangements as well as having a relatively large foreign assistance program to Tunisia. West Germany also is the most active and vocal proponent of Tunisian associated membership with the EEC.

Tunisia concluded a treaty of association with the EEC in 1969. The associate members was broadened on January 7, 1976, when Tunisia became the first Arab country to sign a new agreement with the EEC covering trade and economic cooperation. Under the agreement Tunisia was promised grants and loans worth US$110 million over the next five years. Social security benefits to Tunisian immigrant workers in EEC countries were to be improved. Furthermore, Tunisian agricultural exports, such as wine and olive oil, were to be given increased access to the EEC market. Some EEC restrictions on such exports (olive oil in particular) remained, however, and new restrictions were placed on Tunisian textile exports in 1977. Tunisia continued negotiations to improve its trade relationship with the EEC into 1978.

Trade has also steadily increased with non-EEC members. The United States is among the leading trading partners, generally alternating annually with West Germany for third or fourth place. Trade with East European countries is carried out under special bilateral agreements that rely chiefly on barter rather than currency as the means of settlement. The Soviet Union and Poland are the main trading partners from Eastern Europe. Greece

became an important market for Tunisian exports in 1975 and 1976. Tunisia is additionally a member of the Maghrib Group, which also consists of Algeria, Libya, and Morocco. The chief purpose of this group is to coordinate the long-range development of certain sectors of their economies, particularly as applied to trade, transportation and communications, tourism, and light manufactures. By 1976 Algeria and Libya had become significant trading partners of Tunisia.

Domestic Trade

Traditionally, Tunisia was a nation of independent farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers for whose transactions fairly primitive commercial procedures were entirely adequate. Despite French example and influence, at independence in 1956 the bulk of domestic trade was still carried out by small family-run retail stores. Most were merely stalls or workshops in the traditional open-air markets called souks, where trade was regulated by autonomous merchant and artisan guilds. The larger concerns developed during the period of the protectorate; they were engaged in economically productive agriculture, commerce, and retailing and were controlled by Europeans or Tunisian Jews and supported mostly by foreign residents. For the Muslims the hired camel train, the horse-drawn cart, the souks, and the traditional formalities of bargaining sufficed to fulfill their uncomplicated needs.

The general flow of trade revealed the separation, delineated by region, history, and culture, between the subsistence and the productive economic sectors. Most produce of the south, the west, and the mountains was consumed by the rural population or found its way to the larger regional towns for sale. Surpluses and specialty handicrafts moved north and east to the big port cities. By contrast the economy of the Majardah Valley, the region around Tunis, and the coastal Sahil plateau was based on cash-crop farming and the resultant commerce and business. In this economy wholesaling, banking, commodity brokering, and other practices typical of modern trade flourished.

Domestic trade under the protectorate reflected the requirements and habits of two distinct societies. The European community, concentrated in the northeastern cities and the Sahil, depended heavily on imports. These were purchased according to European tastes, transported in foreign ships, advertised in French-language media, and marketed through French-style retail outlets, including department stores. The more expensive commodities—home appliances, automobiles, fineries, and cosmetics—were beyond the means of all but a small percentage of the Muslim population. Because of the concentration of Europeans in and near the large ports, transportation of goods destined for their sector was easily accomplished by truck and rail; the task performed by wholesalers in assembling, storing, and dispersing them was relatively local in scope.

Domestic trade in the Muslim society followed a pattern established over centuries. The necessary staples—wheat, barley, olive oil, vegetables, and milk—were produced, transported, and marketed locally according to traditional practices. Ancillary goods, such as housewares, carpets, yarns, and clothing from the extensive handicraft industry, were similarly produced and handled. Other than sugar, tea, cheap factory-made textiles and, to a lesser extent, Western garments, the indigenous population acquired little taste for or dependence upon imports.

Urbanization and the development of significant cash and export crops during the protectorate forced changes in the traditional trade pattern. The quantitatively formidable needs of the cities and the difficulty of supplying their souks directly from the countryside resulted in the amplification of wholesaling as a necessary middle step in the distribution system. Commodity brokering in storable surpluses, principally olive oil but also cereals and dates, expanded with the French colons' success in growing for the export market. The purchase, transport, and storage of commodities for sale to urban retailers or export firms became a vital part of an economy that for centuries had required only rudimentary middleman services.

In all traditional fields of agricultural and handicrafts production, the marketing system historically was long and wasteful. Fruit and vegetable growers often sold their produce to a traveling agent, who sold in turn to a provincial wholesaler, who sold to a marketing agent, who finally sold to the retail outlet. The profit extracted by this series of middlemen was considerable, for they operated on a high-return, low-volume basis. Only large individual producers made a good income, the farmers generally preferring to sell their crops on contract before harvest, even though the practice meant a drop in the price they received.

Efforts by the postindependence government to analyze and reform the country's domestic trade organization began in 1961, the year in which the general perspective of the ten-year plan (1962–71) was completed and a system of national planning inaugurated. The imminence of fundamental changes had been forecast during the late 1950s by the withdrawal of European businesses, the flight of French capital from the country, and the general erosion of the commercial channels that had been developed to serve the French and would be needed after their departure to serve the rapidly growing cities. The traditional trade mechanisms, while sufficient for the continuance of life on the subsistence level to which much of the country was accustomed, were clearly inconsistent with the society envisioned by the Neo-Destour Party. Equally important, the viability of the state depended upon maintaining export levels after the French withdrawal, a task to which an efficient wholesale and storage service was vital.

The decree-law of August 30, 1951, initiated the movement toward full Tunisian control of domestic commerce. Under its provisions foreign firms were prohibited from engaging in most forms of commercial activity, exceptions being made in highly technical fields and in maintaining and repairing imported machinery. A definition of the Tunisian firm was made explicit. Foreign-managed firms wishing to continue operations in the country could acquire Tunisian nationality if the firm's main office were located in Tunis, at least 50 percent of its stock were held by Tunisians, and a majority of its board of directors plus its chief managing officer were Tunisian citizens. An exception to this formula was companies centered in Tunisia, which either the government or public organizations had sanctioned by the direct or indirect contribution of state capital. As a result of the law, firms unwilling or financially unable to leave Tunisia were brought under public control or into effective partnership with the state.

In treating the problems of the trade mechanism the government sought to coordinate and increase productivity, reduce excessive middleman profits, encourage superfluous wholesalers to divert capital into production, and generate economies of scale by forcing the pooling of resources at each stage in the distribution chain. The appointment of Ahmed Ben Salah, well known for his conviction that the merchandising system required major overhauling, as secretary of state for planning and finance signaled the government's determination to pursue thoroughgoing reforms in the interest of efficiency. The method adopted by the ministry was an obligatory application of the cooperative system to agricultural producers on the one hand and to wholesalers and retailers on the other hand (see Agriculture, this ch.).

The attempt to restructure domestic commerce into cooperatives or government monopolies was one of the far-reaching policies of the government. The first step was to grant a monopoly on foreign trade in consumer goods to a state entity. Then in 1962 cooperative wholesale monopolies for consumer goods were created in each governorate, which became the sole source of supply for specific goods to retailers. The creation of the provincial cooperatives caused considerable discontent among the displaced middlemen, and various measures were taken in an attempt to mollify them and to channel their capital into productive uses outside the wholesale business. Ownership of the new wholesaler network lay in the hands of the retailers who had been required to subscribe capital to the cooperative venture established in their region.

After 1966 the focus of state reforms shifted to the retailers. The method of reorganization was to require from three to five private retailers to regroup themselves into a single expanded store by pooling their capital and inventory on a cooperative basis. The new stores were less convenient to their customers than formerly; but goods were cheaper, and the incomes of the retailers rose

because overhead was less. After the abandonment of the agricultural cooperative movement in 1969, some individual retail merchants began to withdraw from their cooperatives and requested permission to reopen as individual merchants. Since then many of the cooperatives have been dissolved, but others have continued to function, apparently because many retailers found it more profitable to maintain the new arrangement. By the late 1970s domestic trade was in the hands of either private individuals, state monopolies, mixed state-private enterprises, or cooperatives.

By the late 1970s there were about 10,000 firms conducting some import business, many for their own account; about 200 establishments accounted for the bulk of total imports. Certain agricultural products, such as cereals, olives, and wine, are marketed by national marketing boards. Most other produce is distributed by producers or private traders, some of whom are organizing into marketing cooperatives that predate the era of forced cooperativization. Milk is marketed either by the government-owned Tunisian Milk Company or by private vendors. Livestock is channeled through local markets directly to urban butchers. Goods manufactured by small enterprises generally are marketed through wholesalers or other middlemen. Larger manufacturing enterprises may have their own marketing outlets.

The chief focus of trade in the traditional sector is the souk, a word literally designating a stall or semioutdoor store but pertaining generally to any collection of such outlets forming a marketplace. In cities such marketplaces operate daily and in permanent structures. In the countryside the market materializes weekly at a customary crossroads, field, or village, which often becomes identified by the day on which commerce is held there or by the dominant tribe doing business in the area—the modern city of Souk al Arba, for example, translates literally "Market of the Fourth [Day]"—Wednesday.

The typical souk is organized according to the traditional prestige of the various trades. Dealers in perfumes, incense, and candles rank first and occupy its center. Around them are distributed booksellers, tailors, dyers, jewelers, potters, leather workers, coppersmiths, gunsmiths, and workers in the other trades present in the community. On the outskirts are woodworkers and blacksmiths. Retailers are organized into guilds overseen by a provost whose assistants collect rents, supervise the market, and act as mediators in disputes. Sales transactions are typically vociferous and formal, involving lengthy bargaining and often the drinking of coffee before a price is agreed upon. Auctioning, sometimes concluded by intermediaries after the buyer has offered his bid and retired to a nearby coffeehouse, is a style of transaction suited to the purchase of animals and bulk goods.

The mechanics of commerce in the souk are rudimentary. Generally situated outdoors or in narrow streets shaded by lattices, the market area is accessible to both suppliers and customers. Mer-

chandise, arriving through the crowds of shoppers by mule or hand-drawn cart, is delivered to the retailers's stall where it is merely unloaded and displayed for sale in cartons and baskets, on shelves, or on the ground. Other stalls are workshops in which wares produced on the premises can be acquired directly from the artisan and his apprentices.

In the case of rural souks, made up of family enterprises assembled weekly from the surrounding countryside, little or no wholesale function exists, transportation from field or loom to marketplace being provided by each family wishing to sell goods. The rural souks are generally held weekly although some are held twice weekly, usually on the outskirts of the village but sometimes within the town itself. Products are grouped by kind, and in almost all rural markets livestock predominate. Perishable foods are also sold at rural markets, but most food vendors now have stalls in municipal food markets, which operate on a daily basis. Miscellaneous hardwares and dry goods form another important element of the weekly souk as do itinerants offering personal services, such as cobblers and tailors. The weekly markets also serve a social and administrative function. Mail, for example, is delivered to persons attending the market from outlying areas, and public information is given out by a town crier. Peasant women who accompany their menfolk usually congregate by themselves and socialize.

Individual urban consumer services, such as laundries, drycleaners, tailors, barbers, and shoemakers, are usually one-man shops. Western-style services, such as hairdressers and travel agencies, exist in tourist centers and the larger cities. Some services, expert tailoring for example, are in high demand as a result of the decline in the Jewish population. Other services available in the major cities include real estate and housing agencies, pharmacies, modern laundry and dry-cleaning establishments, photo studios, travel agencies, hairdressing salons, and cinemas. Several firms in Tunis provide advertising and market research services.

The metric system of weights and measures has practically replaced the traditional Tunisian system. Grain, however, is still sold domestically in *kaffis* (sing., *kfiz*) and *wibas*. The *kfiz* is made up of sixteen *wibas*, each *wiba* equaling about 0.35 hectoliters. Other traditional units of measurement vary according to the commodity. The volumetric unit called the *r'tal* varies between about 500 and about 1,300 grams. The principal measure of length is the *pik*, which varies between about 50 centimeters in the case of linen (*pik Arbi*) and about 65 centimeters for basic cloth (*pik Andoulsi*).

Normal business hours are from 8:00 or 8:30 A.M. to noon and from 2:00 or 2:30 to 6:30 or 7:00 P.M., depending on the season. Between July and September many stores and businesses are closed for the entire afternoon, and much shopping is accomp-

lished after nightfall. Muslim merchants often close their shops on Fridays; Jewish shopkeepers close on Saturdays.

Tourism

Tunisia's geographic proximity to Europe, favorable climate, lengthy beaches, and impressive historical sites scattered throughout the area contribute to the country's tourist appeal. The island of Jarbah is a major attraction, as are oases in the Tunisian Sahara. Jarbah, in the Gulf of Gabes, is connected to the mainland by a causeway whose foundations were built by the Romans. Fabled as the home of the lotus-eaters, Jarbah has miles of beaches, many small hotels, ancient ruins, mosques, and a Jewish colony dating from the seventh century A.D.

On the advice of international experts the nation has invested heavily in tourism and related industries, and as a result the number of tourists has increased almost annually since 1965. Based upon growth trends, over 1.5 million tourists were expected annually by 1981. Tourism is the leading source of foreign exchange earnings. In 1976, for example, tourism brought in more than 20 percent of total foreign currency earnings. Tourist spending appeared to have leveled off at around the equivalent of US$300 million in the 1975–76 period but jumped to over US$333 million in 1977. Direct employment in the industry in 1976 was estimated at about 25,000 people, indirect employment at 75,000 more. The most rapidly growing segment of the tourist industry has been middle-income tourists arriving in organized tour groups for up to two weeks. A number of European tour companies have built their own hotels to accommodate the influx. A government agency owns a chain of hotels that are operated under management contracts by private concerns, and the government grants liberal tax concessions and other special incentives for investment in the tourist industry.

Despite the fairly rapid expansion of the tourist industry—or perhaps because of it—several inherent problems had surfaced by the late 1970s. These included a lack of sufficient first-class hotel accommodations, isolated beach hotels offering limited attractions and recreational facilities, insufficient infrastructure in some areas, inadequate overseas market promotion of Tunisia's tourist facilities and, perhaps most importantly, inexperienced hotel owners and operators with a lack of trained staff. Fortunately the government and the industry were paying attention to correcting the problems and had established several hotel training centers where middle-level personnel—the most critically needed—can be trained annually.

Transportation and Telecommunications

General control and management of all forms of transportation lie with the government, which coordinates road, rail, sea, and air services and establishes their rates. The transportation system is relatively well developed, but improvements and modernization

were required in the late 1970s after numerous years of neglect (see fig. 10). Railroads are the most important element of the transportation system. Trackage totaled about 1,985 kilometers of which about 480 kilometers were standard gauge. The geographical distribution of the rail system reflects its commercial function of linking mining and main agricultural regions to the seacoast. Three narrow-gauge lines running southwest from the coast join the phosphate regions west of Ebba Ksour, Feriana, and Qafsah to the port cities of Tunis, Susah, and Safaqis respectively. A narrow-gauge coastal line links Tunis to the eastern port chain as far south as Qabis. Standard-gauge trackage is confined to the northern quadrant defined by Tabarqah, Bizerte, Tunis, and Nibbar. The section connecting Tunis to the Algerian border through Souk al Arba is the eastern extremity of the international rail link to Casablanca.

Under the protectorate the rail network was operated by a private organization, which held the railroads on loan from the state. Nationalization after independence brought the lines under a newly created state corporation, the Tunisian National Railroad Company (Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Tunisiens—SNCFT). The bulk of revenues is provided by the transport of freight, particularly phosphates. During the late 1970s SNCFT was in a modernization and expansion program to be able to transport the planned increase in the production of phosphates.

Tunisia inherited a fairly extensive highway network and has improved upon it; but the design characteristics have become insufficent for the growing volume of traffic, and much rehabilitation is required to bring the system up to modern standards. In 1977 there were about 16,700 kilometers of what were termed classified roads (first-, second-, or third-class roads) plus about 14,000 kilometers of seldom-used forest and agricultural roads. About two-thirds of the classified roads were paved. Almost 9,000 kilometers of the classified roads and an equal amount of the unclassified roads were further categorized as rural roads, which are defined as being outside of urban areas and carrying almost entirely agricultural traffic. The rural roads were seldom maintained, mostly unpaved, and almost impassable in wet weather. A rural roads improvement project was to begin in late 1978 in selected areas to improve marketing conditions for farmers and to enable extension services to be brought to outlying areas.

The road system is densest in the northern coastal region, where most cities are connected by paved roads. All coastal cities are linked to inland settlements and are also connected with the road systems of Algeria and Libya. In the south the road system serves a vital function in linking southern areas, notably the city of Madaniyin and the island of Jarbah, to the southernmost railhead at Qabis. Commercial road services are managed by a series of twenty-one local and provincial public transportation companies that were created out of the hundreds of small trucking and bus

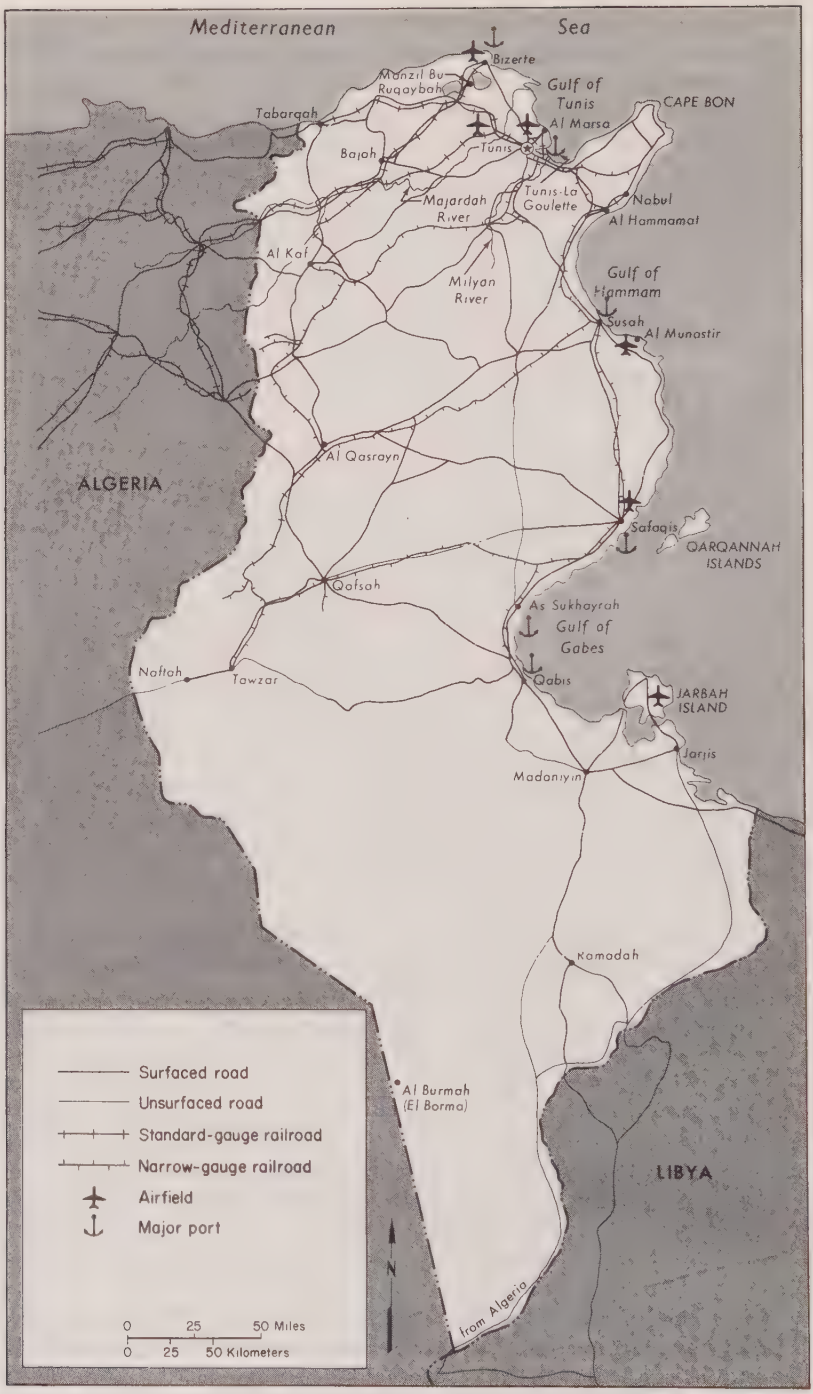


Figure 10. Transportation System, 1978

firms that had previously operated independently. These local enterprises are organized into the National Transportation Company, which is attempting to standardize equipment and coordinate interregional commercial transportation so that fullest use is made of existing units. Both the railroad and the bus companies operate at a loss because fares are deliberately kept low as a social policy. After many years of maintaining the same rates, fares were increased in 1977 and again in 1978 to help offset the costs of new equipment and wage increases of operating personnel but were still too low to cover the costs of operations.

The country has six major seaports: Tunis-La Goulette, Bizerte, Safaqis, Susah, As Sukhayrah, and Qabis. As Sukhayrah is a specialized port handling Algerian and Tunisian petroleum exports, and Safaqis holds a monopoly on the export of olive oil and phosphates. Bizerte and Tunis-La Goulette handle most of the imports. In terms of volume of cargo handled, the ports of Safaqis and Bizerte are the busiest. But both had reached their handling capacity by the late 1970s, and expansion of their port facilities was required to avoid congestion.

There is one shipping concern, the Tunisian Shipping Company (Compagnie Tunisienne de Navigation—CTN), established in 1958 with the controlling interest owned by the government. In the second half of the 1970s CTN began to acquire additional vessels in an attempt to expand its fleet. By 1978 the merchant fleet consisted of thirty-nine vessels totaling 100,000 gross registered tons, a small number in comparison with the national fleets in neighboring Arab countries but a large increase from only seventeen vessels totaling 22,000 gross registered tons in 1970. The fleet included oil tankers, multipurpose vessels, and car ferries, the latter connecting Tunisia with French and Italian seaports to facilitate tourism and trucking of merchandise.

In the mid-1970s CTN accounted for less than 15 percent of all maritime traffic to and from Tunisia, and the government hoped that the acquisition of additional vessels would permit CTN to double its share of ocean freight by the end of the 1977–81 development plan and thereby cut down on the loss of foreign exchange required to pay transportation costs. By 1976 the merchant marine had already reached the stage where additional qualified personnel were required, and the Advanced Merchant Marine Institute was established to train several hundred students annually.

Major airfields are at Bizerte, Tunis, Al Munastir, Safaqis, and Jarbah. Minor fields are at about twelve other locations throughout the country. The main international field is at Al Uwaynah in suburban Tunis and is designated Tunis-Carthage. The airfield at Jarbah was improved to accept international jet traffic, and the airfield at Al Munastir was similarly constructed in the hope of attracting direct jet service from Europe. A new international airport was under construction in the late 1970s at Naftah-Tawzar, 110 kilometers southwest of Qafsah, in an endeavor to accommo-

date tourism to the southern part of Tunisia. When completed, the new airport will have the longest runways in the country.

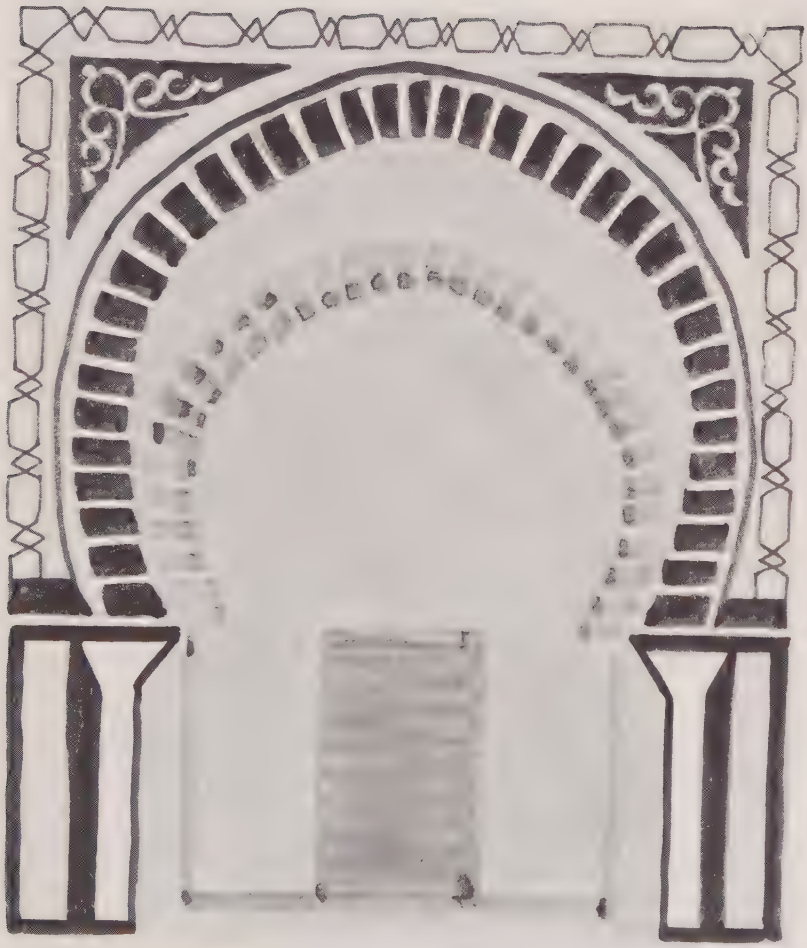
The national airline, Tunis-Air, is owned by the Tunisian government, Air France, and private Tunisians; the state has the controlling interest. Tunis-Air has a monopoly on all internal air traffic and operates scheduled service between Tunis and other Tunisian cities and to several foreign countries. In 1975 Tunis-Air founded a subsidiary company called TUNISAVIA to operate domestic charter flights, but in 1976 TUNISAVIA began some scheduled service, including flights to Malta.

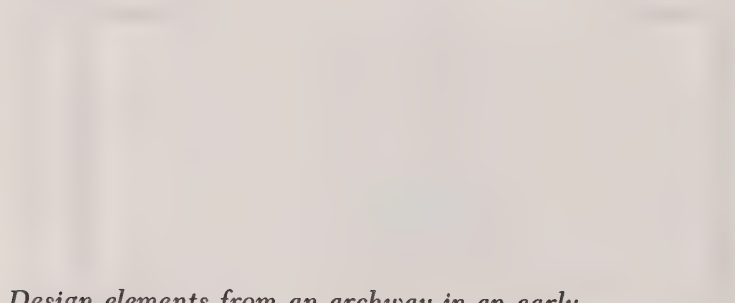
All telecommunications are under the control of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. By 1978 almost 90 percent of the telephones in the country were automatic, after a long-range program of gradually introducing automated switchboards to cut telephone rates and improve service. Automated telephone links also exist with Western Europe via underwater cables to France, and telex service connects Tunisia with several European and neighboring Arab countries.

* * *

Few comprehensive studies on the economy of Tunisia have been written in English since independence. More extensive literature exists in French, but most of it only describes situations rather than analyzing them. A good source of details of the cooperative system is John L. Simmons' two part article "Agricultural Cooperatives and Tunisian Development." The chapter on Tunisia in the International Monetary Fund's *Surveys of African Economies* provides details of economic development during the 1971–74 period. (For further information see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Government and Politics





Design elements from an archway in an early structure built by the Turks

THE FIRST GOAL of the Tunisian nationalist movement was independence. That achieved in 1956, the primary goal became modernization through economic development. Many observers believed the country would not only attain this goal but would do so through a democratic governmental system and a free society. Certainly Tunisia enjoyed a combination of advantages after gaining independence that has rarely been matched in other new countries.

The leadership of Habib Bourguiba was a major advantage. Widely regarded as capable, incorruptible, progressive, dedicated to his country and to his perceptions of its future, and committed to a compassionate, humanistic philosophy regarding the Tunisian people, Bourguiba was respected—even revered—by a citizenry ready to follow his lead. A popular party existed as a potential vehicle for mobilizing the masses in the development effort. An efficient, uncorrupted civil service and a well-trained cadre of technicians also existed to administer the new state and its development schemes. The issue of Tunisification (the replacement of foreigners by Tunisians in the civil service and educational systems) and arabization (the replacement of the use of foreign languages by Arabic) lacked the emotional and dysfunctional impact that had accompanied similar phenomena in newly independent neighboring states.

Although there was some geographic sectionalism, there were not the deep tribal or ethnic cleavages with which other North African states had to deal. The independence struggle had united the country without causing the mass destruction suffered, for example, by Algeria in its war of independence. Particularly heartening to Western observers was Tunisia's affinity for the Western cultural and social aspects of its heritage and its avowed friendship with the West, despite a foreign relations policy of nonalignment.

In retrospect, however, many of the same observers would note that Tunisia's chosen path toward development carried with it certain inherent problems and dangers. The emphasis on unity, centralization of power, and efficiency undermined local contributions to the development effort. In stressing uniformity, pluralism was shunned; the result was an inability to accept nonconformity and criticism and a refusal to process—much less to accommodate—political dissent, which was equated with a lack of patriotism. Furthermore, as one scholar noted, in concentrating so much power in the office of the presidency, when that office was occupied by a paternalistic national hero (the Supreme Combatant, as Bourguiba is called), "the makers of the Constitution let loose from the political bottle the *jinni* of arbitrary rule." In placing so much dependence on a single individual, the danger

arose that political legitimacy would be based on the leader's personal approval rather than emerge from a true, evolutionary process of institutionalization. For his part, Bourguiba was confronted, in the words of another knowledgeable observer, by the problem of converting the individual Tunisian's "act of homage into an act of [political] participation."

Bourguiba and the single-party political system he created have achieved notable social reforms and economic development, which may well endure to form a base for further progress. The endurance of the political system itself is more problematical. Although no basic change in the system appeared imminent in mid-1978, its future after the end of Bourguiba's presidency was unclear. One of the more important factions critical of the regime was already attempting to found a second, opposition party and in so doing fundamentally alter the established political system and the ethos upon which it was based.

Formal Power

Constitutional Development

In 1857 the bey, or ruler, of Tunisia, influenced by reform-minded European countries, promulgated the Fundamental Pact. The pact contained guarantees of basic human rights, property ownership, and freedom of religion. Four years later, after consultations with Napoleon III, a new bey promulgated the Constitution of 1861, the first such document in the Islamic world. The constitution placed some limitations on the bey's political prerogatives, divided legislative power between him and an appointed council, and provided for an independent judiciary. A revolt three years later caused the suspension of the constitution, but the symbolic importance of the document had been established and would later serve as the basis for the nationalist movement that developed after the turn of the twentieth century.

The nationalist movement led to the creation in 1920 of the country's first political party, the Destour (Constitution) Party. Reacting against the elitism of much of the party's French-educated, middle-class membership and against its goal of limited, legalistic reform of the French protectorate, a group of young Destour members, led by Bourguiba, founded the Neo-Destour Party in 1934. The Neo-Destour Party led the independence movement, which resulted in self-governing autonomy in 1955 and in complete Tunisian independence on March 20, 1956.

Elections for the Constituent Assembly of ninety-eight members were held on March 25, 1956, in accordance with a decree issued by the bey. The main task of the assembly was the drafting of a constitution. The bey was to have no role in the drafting process, and he publicly pledged to promulgate the constitution as written by the assembly. The Neo-Destour Party ran on the National Union ticket, an electoral front that also included members of national labor, agricultural, and merchant organizations, as

well as some independents. Less than 20,000 of the more than 616,000 votes cast went to non-National Union candidates.

The Constituent Assembly began work on April 8, 1956. Bourguiba was elected its presiding officer, a position he soon relinquished when he became the country's prime minister. The assembly took three years to complete a draft constitution. Part of the delay was because of Bourguiba's preoccupation with establishing an effective government and party apparatus, which minimized the time he could devote to the legal aspects of the constitution. Thus, in large part, the final document did not establish institutions and procedures but rather legitimized those that Bourguiba had implemented. Some of the delay in drafting the constitution was also caused by the necessity of reworking portions of the document that provided for a constitutional monarchy in the form of the beylicate as pressure grew to replace the monarchy with a republican form of government. On July 25, 1957, the assembly unanimously passed a resolution ending the beylicate and establishing Tunisia as a republic. It further provided for Bourguiba, as president of the republic, to assume the duties of head of state in addition to those of head of government, which he already held as prime minister. On June 1, 1959, the Constituent Assembly approved the draft constitution, which was promulgated by Bourguiba later the same day.

Rather than copy the 1958 Constitution of the French Fifth Republic, as did the constitutions of many other former French colonies in Africa, the Tunisian Constitution is patterned after that of the United States. It entrusts significantly greater powers to the office of the president than does the American document, however. The Constitution establishes Tunisia as a republic. Like the constitutions in other North African states, it also establishes Islam as the official religion and Arabic as the official language, and it proclaims Tunisia to be "part of the Great Arab Maghreb, to whose unity it works within the framework of common interests."

Sovereignty is vested in the people, who are also formally guaranteed several basic liberties—such as equality before the law and presumption of innocence in legal proceedings; freedom of expression, the press, and assembly; and inviolability of the home. Many such liberties have been circumscribed in practice, however, based on the constitutional stipulation that they may not be exercised in such a way as to disturb public order and on the passage of subsequent legislation that prohibits such actions as defamation of the president.

The Constitution provides for three branches of government—an executive, a legislature, and a judiciary—and for intergovernmental relations between them. The executive in particular and all branches in general are dominated by the president. Electoral requirements for the presidency and members of the legislature are specified. Although judicial independence is stipulated, the status of the judiciary is clearly regarded as inferior to that of

the other two branches. The courts have no jurisdiction over disputes between the president and the legislature, nor may they interpret the Constitution. The prerogatives of the president and the executive branch are specified. The National Assembly is given both sole legislative power and significant formal supervisory and controlling powers over general government policy, the budget, and treaties, These factors notwithstanding, however, the judiciary's lack of power to rule on the constitutionality of legislation and the assembly's deferring to the leadership of Bourguiba have precluded an effective system of checks and balances.

Either the president or a minimum of one-third of the members of the National Assembly may initiate amendment or revision of the Constitution (excluding the provision for the republican form of government, which may not be altered under any circumstances). A special commission must then study the proposed revision, which may not be further considered by the assembly until a resolution to that effect is passed by an absolute majority of the assembly membership. Adoption of the revision requires two separate votes at least three months apart, each by a minimum of two-thirds of the assembly membership. A constitutional revision so adopted becomes effective after promulgation by the president.

The Constitution has been revised on several occasions since 1959. Revisions in 1965 and 1967 reduced legislative sessions from two to one per year. In 1969 the constitutional provisions pertaining to presidential succession were modified. Provisions covering presidential candidate requirements and presidential succession were modified in March 1975, and Bourguiba became president for life. Broad revisions were adopted in April 1976 covering a reduction in the age requirement for National Assembly candidates; the precise composition of the Council of State; delineation of executive and legislative powers (with the National Assembly gaining the power to force the resignation of the government and ultimately of the president through adoption of censure motions); presidential reeligibility, candidacy requirements, and succession; differentiation between organic laws (those involving constitutional articles, fundamental civil liberties, judicial powers, electoral laws, and budgetary considerations) and ordinary laws; and the implementation of a national referendum procedure.

Executive

The Constitution vests dominant political powers in the president of the republic, who is both head of state and head of government (the executive branch). By August 1978, when research for this book was completed, only Bourguiba had filled the office of president. Eligibility requirements for presidential candidates include membership in the Islamic faith, a minimum age of forty years, enjoyment of all civil rights, and uninterrupted Tunisian citizenship traceable at least to the paternal grandfather. A special commission must approve the eligibility of candidates. Each

candidacy must be presented to the commission by a minimum of thirty National Assembly members or municipal council presidents.

The Constitution stipulates that the president is elected for a five-year term (concurrent with the term of the National Assembly) by universal, direct, and secret suffrage. The election is held during the last thirty days of the incumbent president's term. In November 1974 Bourguiba, running unopposed, was elected to his fourth consecutive presidential term. Formal provisions covering presidential elections were muted through the adoption of a constitutional revision in March 1975. In "an exceptional case and in consideration of the eminent services rendered by the Supreme Combatant Habib Bourguiba," the assembly unanimously adopted the revision that made him president of the republic for life (see Major Political Developments, this ch.).

The president determines the basic policies of the nation, makes appointments to high civil and military posts upon the recommendation of the government, accredits Tunisian diplomats and receives foreign diplomatic representatives, ratifies treaties, is the supreme commander of the armed forces, exercises the right of pardon, and declares war and concludes peace (subject to approval by the National Assembly). The president shares the power to initiate legislation with members of the National Assembly, and his measures take precedence. The National Assembly may delegate to the president, for a limited period and for a specific purpose, the right to issue decree-laws. At the end of the predetermined period decree-laws must be submitted to the legislature for ratification. The president also rules by decree-law when the assembly is not in session with the permission of the permanent legislative commission having competence on the matter in question (see Legislature, this ch.). Such a decree-law must be submitted for ratification to the full assembly at its next session.

The president promulgates bills into law within fifteen days of receipt from the legislature. During this period he may return a bill for a second reading, but he must promulgate the bill into law if it is readopted by a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly membership. The president may submit to a national referendum any bill pertaining to the organization of public powers or the ratification of a treaty. If approved by the public, the bill is then promulgated into law.

Like Article 16 in the Constitution of the French Fifth Republic, the Tunisian Constitution provides for broad emergency powers in case of an imminent threat to the country. In these circumstances, after consultation with the prime minister and the president of the National Assembly, the president of the republic may take any measure he feels necessary. During such an emergency period the National Assembly may not be dissolved, and no censure motions may be introduced against the government. The emergency is ended (as are the exceptional measures taken to meet it) when the

president addresses a message to this effect to the National Assembly.

In cases of temporary disability the president may delegate by decree his powers (except for the power of legislative dissolution) to the prime minister. During this period the government remains in office even if it is the subject of a censure motion from the assembly. If the presidency were to fall vacant because of permanent disability, death, or resignation, the prime minister would immediately assume the office and all presidential functions for the remainder of the unexpired term. Should the prime minister also resign or become permanently disabled, the president of the National Assembly would provisionally exercise most presidential functions. He would be followed by the minister of justice in the line of presidential succession. In neither case, however, could these officeholders exercise presidential prerogatives involving treaties, referenda, legislative dissolution, or emergency powers, and elections would be held to designate a new president for the remainder of the unexpired term.

For several years after independence the highest government positions were those of the secretaries of state. There were no ministers, nor was there a prime minister, and members of the government were considered merely advisers to the president rather than executive department heads in their own right. Ministers were designated in 1969, and they form the government or Council of Ministers (cabinet) (see fig. 11). The secretary of state positions remain but are now junior to the ministers. Constitutional revisions have provided for a prime minister both as the chief executive administrator and as the person first in line of presidential succession. Although the president continues to decide basic policies, the prime minister has become increasingly responsible for overseeing the execution of these policies and for the supervision of day-to-day government.

The president appoints the prime minister and, upon the prime minister's recommendation, the other ministers. Solely at his own discretion the president may terminate the tenure of the whole government or any number of its members. He presides over meetings of the Council of Ministers and may delegate most of his powers to the prime minister. Members of the government may attend and address meetings of the National Assembly and its commissions. They, in turn, must reply to written or oral questions from members of the assembly.

In December 1977 a major reshuffling of the Council of Ministers occurred after a ministerial dismissal and several cabinet resignations (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). As of mid-1978 the government consisted of the prime minister, sixteen cabinet ministers, the newly created post of special adviser to the president (occupied by Bourguiba's son, Habib Bourguiba, Jr.), two minister delegates attached to the prime minister's office, and five secretaries of state (see table 12, Appendix). A sixth secretary

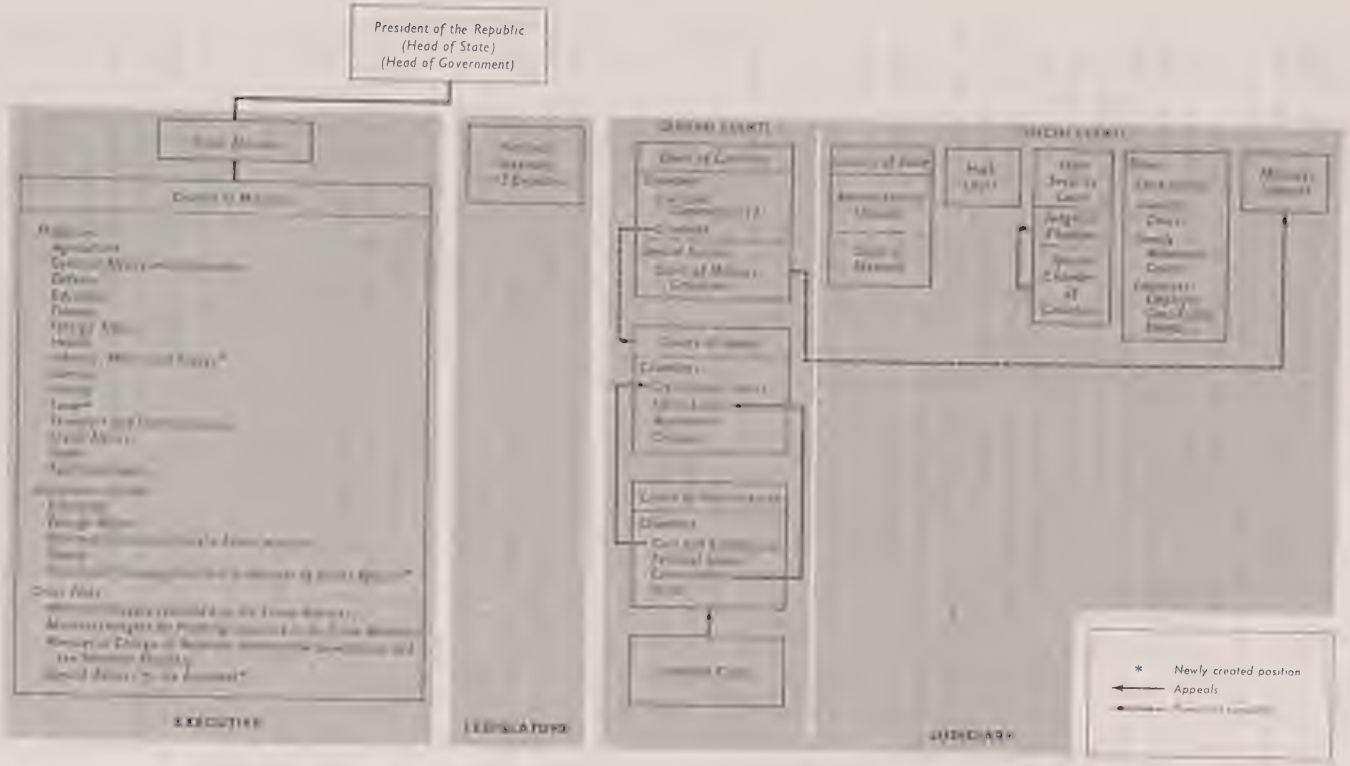


Figure 11 Organization of National Government August 1978

of state position (for defense) had not been filled by July 1978, and there was some question as to whether the post still existed.

Until 1976 the government was responsible only to the president. Constitutional revisions in that year made the government responsible to the National Assembly as well through a motion of censure. The censure procedure is initiated when the assembly notifies the president of its criticism through the adoption of a motion to that effect by an absolute majority of its members. After a period of at least three months an actual censure motion may be introduced with the support of a minimum of one-third of the assembly's membership. The motion requires a two-thirds majority for adoption. If adopted, the censure motion requires the prime minister to submit the government's resignation to the president.

The president may accept the government's resignation or, after conferring with the prime minister and the assembly president, he may dissolve the legislature and call for new elections within thirty days. If during its first session the new assembly passes another censure motion criticizing the same conditions as did the original, the president must resign along with the government.

Two consultative and advisory bodies within the Tunisian governmental structure are the Council of the Republic and the Social and Economic Council. The Council of the Republic, created in 1966, comprises members of the government and of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD). Important ministers are usually members of the PSD's Political Bureau. The president of the republic submits matters to the council for consideration and presides over its meetings. The composition of the Council of the Republic institutionalizes the fusion of state and party at the national level. This fusion has been maintained since independence, although the Constitution does not acknowledge a government role for the PSD or any other political party.

The Social and Economic Council, established in 1961, is composed of forty-two members appointed by the government. Its primary function is to examine draft economic and social legislation and to advise both the government and the National Assembly on such bills. It must be consulted on legislation that involves general economic planning, implementation of specific economic plans, and the national budget.

Legislature

The National Assembly is a unicameral legislative body comprising 112 members, or deputies. Deputies must be at least twenty-eight years of age and have been born of a Tunisian father. They are elected by universal, direct, and secret suffrage; voters must be at least twenty years of age and have possessed Tunisian citizenship for a minimum of five years. The legislative term is five years, concurrent with that of the president. Presidential and legislative elections are held at the same time.

Deputies are elected by an absolute majority in their districts through a list-ballot system. Despite the local basis of electoral districts, a deputy is considered to represent a national constituency. The lists of candidates are compiled by the PSD, which has been the only legal political party since the Tunisian Communist Party (Parti Communiste Tunisien—PCT) was banned in 1963. Press reports indicated that the lists for the 1974 assembly elections contained no choices among candidates, only one candidate being offered for each seat. A deputy must be a member of the PSD; if at any time he loses his PSD affiliation, he must relinquish his seat in the assembly.

The assembly sits in a single session beginning in October and ending in July. Extraordinary sessions may be called by the president of the republic or by a majority of the assembly's members. The power of legislative initiative is shared between the president of the republic and any assembly deputy. The assembly passes ordinary laws by majority vote; organic laws require a two-thirds majority approval. Should the assembly fail to pass the national budget by December 31, financial measures may be put into effect by presidential decree.

The assembly elects from its membership an executive bureau (headed by the president of the assembly) and four permanent commissions, or committees, covering political affairs, cultural and social affairs, financial and economic affairs, and general legislation. The commissions study and report to the whole assembly on proposed legislation that falls within their areas of competence. They continue to meet when the assembly is not in session.

The Constitution provides for legislative immunity, which prohibits the arrest and prosecution of a deputy for actions undertaken in the commission of his assembly mandate. The assembly may, however, lift this immunity by vote, an action that has occurred not infrequently when deputies have run afoul of the government or president (see Major Political Developments, this ch.).

Judiciary

Traditional Tunisian law was based on the sharia of the Islamic religion. The sharia—the revealed law of God, according to Muslims—is derived not only from the Quran but also from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, the interpretations of Islamic jurists, and analogical reasoning. Both the Hanafi and the Malikite schools of Islam were well established in Tunisia before the advent of the French protectorate. Sharia courts, headed by an Islamic judge (*cadi*, pl., *cudah*), had jurisdiction over cases involving personal status (for example, marriage and divorce), inheritance, and landownership.

Temporal power was in the hands of the bey, who could issue regulations in conformance with Islamic principles but could not make laws. According to Islam, laws could originate only from God. A secular court system existed to adjudicate cases outside the

jurisdiction of sharia courts. The personal representative of the bey, the caid, exercised jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and commercial cases in the provinces. In Tunis members of the beylical central administration heard these kinds of cases as well as appeals involving caid decisions. They advised the bey, who made the final decision in the cases.

Unlike other North African Arab states, Tunisia did not have a significant Berber minority, and thus Berber customary law received no official recognition. A sizable Jewish minority did exist, however, and cases among Jews involving personal status and family law and succession were heard by rabbinical courts.

During the protectorate the French left the jurisdiction of the sharia courts untouched for the most part. A new secular court system, staffed by French judges, was created to apply French law in cases involving non-Tunisians or in situations in which no existing Tunisian law applied. The beylical courts were modified to become part of the protectorate administrative system.

After attaining independence Tunisia immediately began modernizing and unifying its legal system. In 1956 sharia courts were abolished, and the Code of Personal Status, far more liberal than corresponding codes in other Arab states, was adopted (see The Individual, the Family, and the Sexes, ch. 2). A noted authority on law in French-speaking Africa, Jeswald W. Salacuse, observed that in relating new legislation to Islamic tradition Tunisian authorities justified their actions "on the grounds of social necessity rather than [religious] orthodoxy." In 1957 application of the Code of Personal Status to all Tunisians regardless of religion ended Judaic law as a separate legal source. At the same time an agreement was concluded with the French, which provided that their court system would cease to function by July 1, 1957. (An earlier agreement would have permitted the French courts to continue hearing cases involving French citizens until at least 1970.) The Code of Civil and Commercial Procedure was adopted in 1959, as was the General Revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure in 1968.

In 1978 the Tunisian judicial system comprised two kinds of courts: general courts (sometimes referred to as regular or common law courts) and special courts. The general courts included, in ascending order of authority, cantonal courts, courts of first instance, courts of appeal, and the Court of Cassation (Cour de Cassation).

At the base of the general court hierarchy are the cantonal courts (*justices cantonales*), which numbered fifty-two in 1975. Rulings are made by a single magistrate in cases involving amounts of up to TD250 (for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary). Cases involving amounts of less than TD100 cannot be appealed. Criminal jurisdiction includes cases involving *contraventions* (petty offenses) and *délits* (misdemeanors). *Contraventions* are punishable by small fines and a maximum of fifteen days' imprison-

ment; rulings involving *contraventions* cannot be appealed. *Délits* are punishable by unlimited fines and imprisonment for sixteen days to five years. The cantonal court's jurisdiction includes those *délits* punishable by fines and imprisonment of less than one year's duration. Rulings in these cases may be appealed.

Above the cantonal courts are the courts of first instance (*tribunaux de première instance*), which numbered fourteen in 1975. Each court comprises a civil and commercial chamber, a personal status chamber, a correctional chamber, and a social chamber. Decisions are rendered by a panel of three judges. The court of first instance is the court of last resort for appeals from the cantonal courts. Original jurisdiction applies to civil and commercial cases involving amounts over TD250 (only cases involving amounts over TD500 may be appealed) and to all cases involving *délits* that are outside the jurisdiction of the cantonal courts.

The three courts of appeal (*cours d'appel*) sit in Tunis, Susah, and Safaqis. Each court comprises one or more civil chambers, a correctional chamber, an accusation chamber, and a criminal chamber. The civil and correctional chambers hear appeals from the courts of first instance on civil and criminal cases, respectively. Appeals may be based on both questions of fact and questions of law. The accusation chamber functions much like a grand jury in the American legal system. It investigates cases involving a *crime*, the most serious kind of criminal offense, which is punishable by a prison sentence of more than five years' duration. If the charge is substantiated, the case is turned over the the criminal chamber and tried. Decisions of the criminal chamber may not be appealed, but they are subject to the Court of Cassation's *pouvoir en cassation* (power of abrogation or annulment).

The highest general court is the Court of Cassation, which sits in Tunis. It is composed of three civil and commercial chambers and one criminal chamber. A panel of three judges considers decisions from lower courts through the court's *pouvoir en cassation*. This power allows the court to annul inferior court decisions. Having annuled such a decision, the Court of Cassation does not itself render a final verdict but rather returns the case to the lower court for a new ruling.

The three more important special courts are the Council of State (Conseil d'Etat), the High Court (Haute Cour), and the State Security Court (Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat). The Council of State is an administrative court comprising an administrative tribunal (*tribunal administratif*) and a court of accounts (*cour des comptes*). the administrative tribunal hears cases by private individuals alleging abuse of power by state or public agencies. The court of accounts audits and verifies state finances. Although the Constitution provided for the Council of State in 1959, the court of accounts and the administrative tribunal were not created until 1968 and 1972, respectively. The president of the republic holds concurrently the position of president of the Council of State.

The constitutional provision for the establishment of the High Court was not implemented until 1970. The court's jurisdiction covers members of the government accused of high treason. The *crime* of high treason includes such offenses as acts against state security, systematic abuse of public authority, purposely misleading the head of state so as to damage the national interest, and the commission of a *délit* or *crime* while in office. The president of the republic (over which the High Court has no jurisdiction) appoints a career magistrate to be the court's president. Decisions of the High Court are final, subject to neither appeal nor *pouvoir en cassation.*

The State Security Court was established in 1968 (see Criminal Justice System, ch. 5). It comprises a judgment chamber and a special chamber of cassation. The members of each chamber include a career magistrate as president and four assessors (two magistrates and two National Assembly deputies). All members are appointed by presidential decree. The special chamber of cassation may review rulings of the judgment chamber through its *pouvoir en cassation.*

Other courts with specialized jurisdictions include land courts, juvenile courts, family allowance courts, and employer-employee conciliation boards. Military justice is dispensed by the permanent Military Tribunal sitting in Tunis. Appeals based only on points of law go to a special section of the general Court of Cassation called the Court of Military Cassation (Cour de Cassation Militaire).

The Constitution also provides for the Superior Council of the Magistracy (Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature). The council is charged with administering discipline within the judiciary and supervising career transfers and promotions.

In 1976 press reports indicated that some Tunisian magistrates had joined several groups and private individuals in alleging that civil liberties were not being properly respected (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). Three former presidents of the Tunisian Bar Association, together with sixty-nine other magistrates, were said to have signed a petition to this effect during the Independence Day celebrations of that year.

Press reports also indicated that on at least one occasion junior magistrates had become seriously dissatisfied with the gap between their salaries and professional benefits and those of the senior magistrates. They were also reported to be concerned about statements attributed to some politicians, which included the intention of converting the judiciary into an agent of the executive. More than sixty junior magistrates staged a one-day strike on May 26, 1977. An unlimited strike reportedly planned to begin on June 20 was apparently canceled when the government established a commission to resolve the dispute.

Subnational Government

Tunisia is a unitary state; all authority flows from the central (national) government, and lower governmental units have no inherent or residual authority of their own. Constitutional provisions covering subnational government are limited to the statement that "municipal and regional Councils conduct the local affairs, under the conditions foreseen by law." Subsequent legislation has established a well-organized system of regional and local administration that stresses the interdependence of government and party.

The highest regional authority is the governorate. Thirteen governorates were established soon after independence, a figure that was increased to fourteen in 1972 and eighteen in 1974 (see fig. 1). The chief executive of the governorate is the governor, who is appointed by the president upon the recommendation of the minister of the interior. The governor also serves as the regional director of the PSD and is a member of the party's national Central Committee. He is assisted by the Governorate Council, which is composed of representatives from the national organizations, members of the party's regional coordination committee, and communal syndicate presidents (see Destourian Socialist Party; Interest Groups, this ch.). The council's primary duties include examination of the governorate's finances and budget and consultation regarding social and economic requirements and regional planning.

Governors are periodically shifted, some being assigned to different governorates and others appointed to new political positions. Such a shift occurred in the spring of 1978. An earlier shift in 1964 was explained as necessary to promote national unity and minimize regional sectionalism.

Each governorate is composed of several sectors (*secteurs*), each headed by a sector chief (*chef de secteur*). The sector chief is appointed by the minister of the interior, upon the recommendation of the governor, from among the members of the committees of local party cells. Sectors, which were created in 1969, replaced the traditional, tribal-oriented subregional administrative unit known as the *sheikhat*. Each *sheikhat* was headed by a local sheikh, who was selected by the secretary of state for the interior. Several sectors are organized administratively into a delegation (*délégation*), each delegation being headed by a delegate (*délégué*). The delegate, a central-government-appointed civil servant, is responsible to the governor.

Local governmental powers are vested in the commune, which the central government creates by decree. There were 158 communes in 1975. The commune is administered by the communal council (often referred to as the municipal council), which is elected by the local population. The council's powers are narrowly defined, and its actions are subject to the supervision of the governor and ultimately of the minister of the interior. The council

selects a president from among its members. An exception is the commune of Tunis, where the president of the republic chooses the council president from among its elected members. The council president represents both the locality and the central government.

Independents were elected over party candidates in a few communes in the first communal elections, held in 1957. In subsequent elections, held at three-year intervals, only the PSD has presented candidate lists. For some time council candidate lists were compiled by regional party authorities. In 1972, however, local PSD cells were given the responsibility of selecting their area's candidates. In May 1975 council candidates were elected for five-year terms rather than the usual three-year terms. The Constitution permits non-PSD candidates to run, but none did so. The PSD did not insist on party membership as a requirement for candidacy on its electoral lists. Those lists included twice as many candidates as there were seats to be filled.

In 1959 legislation was adopted permitting communal councils to form syndicates. Syndication enables several councils to pool property, revenues, and developmental loans and to share the responsibility and expense of providing utilities and other services.

Actual Power

Major Political Developments

After independence the basic political strategy was twofold: centralization of administrative power with which to effect change and subjugation of any traditions that might hamper modernization. Although Destourian socialism would eventually emerge, the watchword in the modernization effort was to be pragmatism, the hallmark of the Bourguiba method (see Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism, this ch.).

The centralization of power was accomplished through new political institutions and a reorganization of the party and was formalized in the 1959 Constitution. The attack on those aspects of tradition that might be in opposition to modernization began with social reform legislation and an attempt to neutralize or manipulate the more conservative aspects of the Islamic religion. The 1956 Code of Personal Status made Tunisia the most socially progressive of Arab states, particularly regarding the emancipation of women.

A major part of the attempt to neutralize conservative aspects of Islam occurred shortly after independence when the sharia courts were abolished in a general reorganization of the judiciary. In 1957 the transfer of all *habus* property (an Islamic institution in which land is made inalienable and income derived from it is devoted to religious, charitable, or general welfare use) to the state was completed (see Independent Tunisia, ch. 1).

Bourguiba faulted conservative Islam for its failure to adapt to logic and reason, for being "an impediment, an excuse for laziness, a factor of Muslim regression and an obstacle to freedom of thought and creative action." He noted the failure of the ulama (body of Islamic scholars) to support the nationalist movement in the independence struggle against the French. In 1960 Bourguiba even attempted to alter the celebration of Ramadan, a variable month-long period in which the Islamic faithful fast and usually restrict work during daylight hours and feast after dark. He found this a wasteful practice that a developing country could ill afford, but he was generally unsuccessful in convincing the people that they should convert Ramadan into an annual jihad (see Glossary) against poverty and underdevelopment.

Other attempts have been made to reform religious education—particularly at the secondary-school level, where Islamic studies have been minimized in favor of general philosophy (see Education, ch. 2). Although there has been significant public resistance to some of the attacks on religious tradition, religion has not served as the basis for an organized, conservative opposition to the Bourguiba regime. In fact, Bourguiba continues to appeal to Islamic teachings to win public support. In a 1973 speech to the National Union of Tunisian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes—UNFT) he stressed adherence to Islam as a means of combating public immorality. Later, when labor and student opposition to the government led to violence in late 1977 and early 1978, he appealed for acceptance of such Islamic tenets as moderation, order, and obedience to authority.

During the time while attempts were being made to modify social and religious traditions, the state was consolidating control and creating new political institutions. The violent but short-lived insurrection led by Salah Ben Youssef was quashed with the help of French security forces. Ben Youssef, a pan-Arabist who had rivaled Bourguiba in leading the Neo-Destour Party against the French, strongly opposed the 1955 agreement granting Tunisian autonomy, preferring instead to continue the fight for immediate, full independence.

Tunisia gained independence in 1956. A year later the Constituent Assembly deposed the bey, proclaimed the republic, and appointed Bourguiba president. The drafting of the Constitution slowly continued; some observers have noted that Bourguiba preferred to establish government institutions and practices before completion of the Constitution lest that document prove too restrictive on central authority and thus limit its capacity to govern and lead the modernization effort. When completed in 1959, the Constitution legitimized the vesting of dominant political power in the office of the president, so much so in fact that some scholars have described the Tunisian regime as a "presidential monarchy."

The 1955 party congress supported a vague concept of economic planning. A year later the trade union movement, headed by Ahmed Ben Salah, advocated centralized state economic planning as the basic approach to be used in the development effort. Although not communist itself, the General Tunisian Labor Union (Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail—UGTT) traced its roots to the communist-dominated French General Confederation of Workers (Confédération Générale des Travailleurs—CGT). Bourguiba was not yet in favor of such planning, nor did he want to establish a strong planning agency that might usurp some of his authority; Ben Salah was therefore forced from the union leadership (see Interest Groups, this ch.).

In 1960 the trade union movement again called for centralized state economic planning. Bourguiba now supported the concept, and a new government department was created in January 1961. Ben Salah was appointed to the post and permitted to draw from other departments in assembling his planning team. In June Bourguiba introduced the concept of Destourian socialism. Based on a combination of humanistic ethics and moderate government intervention in social and economic affairs, Bourguiba's form of socialism was much less extreme than the policies envisioned by Ben Salah (see Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism, this ch.). Nevertheless emphasis was increasingly placed on the importance of centralized state planning, and Ben Salah's position became second only to that of Bourguiba in political power and authority.

A major foreign policy crisis also occurred in 1961 when French and Tunisian forces clashed over the issue of continued French occupation of the naval base at Bizerte (see Relations with France, ch. 1; see General Development Trends, ch. 5). Over 1,000 Tunisians were killed, and diplomatic relations between the two countries were broken. Bourguiba's judgment was questioned by those who believed that the issue need not have resulted in bloodshed. His moderation and pragmatism came to the fore, however, and a satisfactory agreement was negotiated with France. In October 1963 French forces completed their evacuation of the Bizerte base.

In December 1962 a plot to assassinate Bourguiba was discovered. Ben Youssef supporters, old Destourian Party adherents, army elements, and Communists were implicated. (A few months later, in 1963, the PCT was banned, leaving the Neo-Destour Party as Tunisia's only legal political party.) Neighboring Algeria, which had just gained its independence from the French, was also accused of complicity in the assassination plot. Subsequent negotiations led to an eventual border agreement between Tunisia and Algeria, whose frontier had been in doubt from the colonial period (see Foreign Relations, this ch.).

The regional structure of the Neo-Destour Party was modified in 1963, underscoring the fusion between party and state. A dual administrative structure implemented in 1958 had created sepa-

rate party delgates to function alongside the government delegates and had placed the party organization in each governorate under a commissioner. The 1963 change abolished the party delegates and the post of party commissioner, placing regional party control directly under the governor. Further, the party's regional coordination committee became an integral part of a state administrative organ, the Governorate Council (see Subnational Government; Destourian Socialist Party, this ch.). A formal fusion of party and state at the national level occurred in 1966 with the creation of the Council of the Republic. In October 1964 the seventh party congress, called the Congress of Destiny—the previous congress in 1959 had been termed the Congress of Victory—approved the organizational changes, acclaimed state economic planning and Destourian socialism, and changed the name of the party to the Destourian Socialist Party. In November Bourguiba, running unopposed, was elected to a second presidential term.

Earlier in 1964 all foreign-owned land was nationalized without compensation. Shortly thereafter economic planning, as directed by Ben Salah, became based on the principle of collectivization. Many middle-class merchants and shopkeepers were organized hastily into commercial units, consumer cooperatives were established, and agricultural cooperatives were instituted in the area where most of the former French-owned farms were located. Bourguiba firmly supported the collectivization effort, which was seen both as an ideological aspect of Destourian socialism and as a pragmatic approach needed to develop the national economy.

Despite attempts to educate the public regarding the advantages of the cooperative system, significant opposition existed among the peasantry, governorate officials, and party members. Opposition increased because of overcentralization, excessive bureaucracy, and mismanagement caused by government officials who lacked agricultural expertise. Ahmed Mestiri, a leading party liberal, resigned his position as secretary of state for defense in protest against Ben Salah's policies. Hedi Nouira, who later became prime minister, was also known to have opposed the policies of the planning secretary.

Ben Salah reacted to the opposition by attempting to accelerate and extend his program in the agricultural sector of the economy. In January 1969 he began implementing agricultural production cooperatives nationwide, a move that threatened the Tunisian owners of large landholdings in the Sahil region. Violent demonstrations against the cooperatives were staged that spring by Sahil villagers. Stocks of sheep and cattle were halved as farmers slaughtered their animals or smuggled them into Algeria to prevent their takeover by the cooperatives. The increasing opposition led eventually to Ben Salah's political demise. Some observers have also suggested that the president, who was ill at the time, might well have felt his position threatened by Ben Salah's continued accumulation of power and by the planning department's

increasing authority. Ben Salah had been spoken of—both in and out of government—as Bourguiba's obvious successor.

In September 1969 Ben Salah was transferred from the planning department to the education department. He was subsequently arrested, convicted of abuse of power and irregularities in the fiscal management of the planning department, and sentenced to a ten-year prison term. The planning department was divided into three separate departments, each headed by a secretary of state. Public faith in the president's judgment may well have been undermined when he was forced to reverse his long-established position supporting Ben Salah and the collectivization scheme. In June 1973 Ben Salah escaped from prison and fled to Western Europe, where he became an outspoken critic of the Bourguiba regime (see Opposition, this ch.).

The turmoil surrounding the Ben Salah situation made it necessary for Bourguiba to regroup his forces and reassert his authority over political decisionmaking. Mestiri was brought back into the government as minister of the interior, and another trusted official, Bahi Ladgham, was appointed to the new post of prime minister. Ladgham soon became involved in mediating the conflict between King Hussein and the Palestinian Arabs in Jordan, and he was replaced as prime minister by Nouira. In June 1970 Bourguiba, who had been elected to his third consecutive, unopposed presidential term the previous year, publicly called for greater liberalization and democratization within the political system.

In June 1971 Habib Boulares, the minister of cultural affairs and information, resigned in protest against what he perceived to be a lack of progress toward political liberalization. Mestiri attempted to resign from both the government and the PSD for the same reason. When Bourguiba returned to Tunisia late in the month after a prolonged trip to Switzerland and the United States for medical treatment, he was confronted by Mestiri's dissatisfaction with the continuing delay in setting a date for an overdue party congress, inaction in democratizing the presidential succession process, and the intransigence of the conservative faction of the party. Bourguiba rejected Mestiri's government and party resignations and apparently convinced him that liberalization of the political system would proceed. A date for the party congress was set for October, and it was announced that in upcoming National Assembly by-elections candidates would be selected by local party officials rather than by regional and national party authorities.

Just before the October 1971 party congress, to be held in Al Munastir, Nouira appointed several officials to posts in Mestiri's interior ministry. When Mestiri complained, Bourguiba dismissed him. The defense minister, Hasib Ben Ammar, then resigned in protest. Despite this prelude, the liberal faction at first appeared successful in gaining concessions at the party congress. Against Bourguiba's wishes the congress recommended that succession to the presidency be based on universal suffrage. The congress also

attempted to establish the practice of electing rather than appointing high party officials. When the Central Committee was elected, Ladgham and Mestiri finished first and second, respectively.

Selection of the party's Political Bureau, however, indicated that the liberalization movement had come to a halt. Rather than the members of the Central Committee freely electing the Political Bureau, they were permitted to vote only for candidates whose names appeared on a list prepared by Bourguiba. The president refused to relinquish control over the selection of his closest advisers, and the list excluded many party reformers. In the meantime Mestiri was accused of factionalism and was vigorously criticized in the Tunisian press. He was later suspended and then expelled from the party.

If those desiring political liberalization were given pause by the final outcome of the 1971 party congress, proponents of economic liberalization were more satisfied. In reversing Ben Salah's collectivization policies, the congress endorsed legislation that reaffirmed the coexistence of three economic sectors: public, cooperative, and private. It also supported legislation that allowed some of the peasant cooperatives to revert to private ownership and much of the public land to be sold to private buyers. Still more legislation in 1972 gave substantial financial incentives to foreign companies in an attempt to attract investment (see Foreign Investment, ch. 3).

In 1973 Bourguiba caused the reinstatement of a previously nullified law that required National Assembly deputies who lost their PSD membership to relinquish their legislative seats. Described by Nouira as necessary to enforce party discipline, the move forced Ladgham (who had resigned from the PSD in 1973) and Mestiri (who had been expelled from the PSD in 1972) from the legislature.

The September 1974 party congress, again held in Al Munastir, attempted to excise the liberal drift of the previous congress and underscored Bourguiba's reassertion of control over party and state. In a conference speech Bourguiba blamed the liberal excesses of the previous party gathering on those who mistakenly believed that he was "about to die and that the presidency would soon be vacant." He added that he had "now come back in full strength and in very good health to be at the helm of this Congress which is to adopt resolutions to put matters in order." The congress approved a plan whereby the appointed prime minister would succeed to the presidency should that office become vacant. It also relinquished any participatory role in the selection of the Political Bureau and elected Bourguiba party president for life. Bourguiba selected a twenty-member Political Bureau from among the members of the Central Committee; bureau members included the prime minister and thirteen other ministers. In

November Bourguiba, again running unopposed, was popularly reelected to his fourth consecutive presidential term.

The extent of dissension within the party was illustrated by the purge that occurred during the 1974 congress. Seven prominent members of the liberal PSD faction published a declaration condemning the arbitrary exclusion of the Central Committee from party decisionmaking, including the preparations for the 1974 congress. Mestiri already had been expelled from the party, but three other former ministers and a former secretary of state were among the declaration signers. They included Boulares, Ben Ammar, Benji Caid Essebsi, and Sadok Ben Jamaa. The congress expelled the declaration's seven signatories from the party.

A major aberration in Tunisia's usually moderate, well-reasoned foreign policy also occurred in 1974, when Bourguiba agreed to a unification scheme with Libya (see Foreign Relations, this ch.). Bourguiba had rejected totally a similar plan only a year earlier. Prime Minister Nouira apparently convinced him to reconsider his sudden enthusiasm for unification and to disapprove the new plan. Foreign Minister Mohamed Masmoudi, who had been instrumental in negotiating the proposed merger, was soon removed from office. The affair again raised questions about the president's judgment.

Beginning in the late 1960s domestic social and political discontent became increasingly obvious. Particularly evident was dissension of students and organized labor. By the mid-1970s student demonstrations and strikes against education policies and government involvement in the General Union of Tunisian Students (Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens—UGET) had become annual events (see Interest Groups, this ch.). Symbolic of the reaction against the increasing opposition was the constitutional revision that modified the sequence and priorities of the national motto from "Freedom, Order, Justice" to "Order, Freedom, Justice." The revision was adopted in April 1976.

Labor strikes began in earnest in 1976 when textile, metal, and tobacco workers, joined by public-sector workers in the utilities, postal service, transportation, and health fields, staged walkouts not sanctioned by the national labor organization, the UGTT. High rates of unemployment and wages that failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living were the major causes of the strikes. Some of the job actions were also directed against poor management. Habib Achour, leader of the UGTT, appeared caught in a dilemma; he was pressured by government officials to ensure labor peace necessary for the economic development effort, while at the same time militant unionists compelled him to gain government policies more favorable to the workers. Achour condemned the wildcat strikes, but by the end of 1976 he was also publicly criticizing government financial and management policies.

In early 1977 an attempt was made to ensure labor's cooperation during the 1977–81 period of the fifth development plan. Under a

social pact periodic wage revisions were tied to the cost of living and increased productivity (see Income and Wealth, ch. 3). Achour, who reportedly rejected an overture by the 1977 UGTT national congress to install him as union president for life, initially supported the social pact. Union militants soon condemned its implementation as unfair to labor, however. Nonsanctioned strikes continued, approximately forty such job actions occurring during the first half of the year. In October the most serious strike to that date occurred in Qasr Hellal, the birthplace of the Neo-Destour Party. Striking workers protested factory mismanagement and were strongly supported by the townspeople. The protest became violent, and the army was called in, marking the first time since independence that the military had to be used in quelling a civil disturbance. The strike had not been sanctioned, but the UGTT condemned the action of the police and military rather than that of the workers. Regime opponents such as Mestiri, Masmoudi, and Ben Salah publicly supported the UGTT in its dispute with the government.

With such regime critics flocking to the union cause, the labor-government dispute clearly had transcended bread-and-butter economic issues and become more political in character. Achour's UGTT was by far the strongest opposition to the ruling regime, opposition that was viewed increasingly in some quarters as a direct threat. Union-government relations were further strained in early November when an apparently private political discussion led to an alleged threat against Achour's life. The incident was publicized widely, and those involved were arrested. Delays in bringing the accused to trial, however, caused some union members to view the situation as part of a general intimidation campaign against the UGTT. Several brief strikes in support of Achour were called by various unions. Members of the UGTT accused the government of inciting violence when some of the strikes became disorderly.

The government appeared to harden its stance toward organized labor on December 23, 1977, when Interior Minister Taher Belkhodja (who favored conciliation with the unions) was dismissed. The defense minister, Abdulla Farhat, was transferred to the interior post, and he immediately replaced the director of the Sûreté Nationale (national police) with an army colonel. Shortly after Belkhodja's dismissal six cabinet members resigned, including Foreign Minister Habib Chatti; the ministers of health, social affairs, relations between the government and the National Assembly, and the national economy; and the secretary of state for defense. The Ministry of the National Economy subsequently was divided into two ministries: industry, mines, and energy; and trade.

Those appointed to replace the resigned cabinet officials were believed to favor forcing the UGTT into compliance with government policy to halt the social unrest. Included among the new

cabinet posts was the position of special adviser to the president, filled by Habib Bourguiba, Jr. A former foreign minister, justice minister, and ambassador to the United States, the younger Bourguiba had been mentioned frequently as a possible presidential successor until ill health had forced him to retire from the government in 1971. He then took the post of president and director general of the Economic Development Bank of Tunisia (Banque de Développement Economique de Tunisie—BDET) until rejoining the cabinet six years later.

Tension between the government and the union federation mounted in late December when a visiting UGTT delegation in Libya publicly supported that country's Middle Eastern policy (see Foreign Relations; Libya, this ch.). Government-UGTT relations became more strained in early January 1978. The UGTT demanded the release of earlier detained strikers, particularly those who had participated in the Qasr Hellal incident in October 1977. On January 10 the UGTT national council adopted a resolution condemning Nouira's government, which it alleged was "oriented toward the consolidation by all means of a capitalist class to the detriment of the national interest, the more so because this class links its interest to those of foreign exploiting capital." The government replied that it had become clear that an unrepresentative, radical minority had infiltrated the ranks of the UGTT and taken control of that organization. The same day that the council issued its condemnation of the government, Achour resigned from the PSD Central Committee and Political Bureau, but not from the PSD itself. He confirmed that his action indicated disagreement with the government's political, economic, and social policies, but he stressed that it did not reflect a total break with the party. The predicament of holding leadership posts in two increasingly bipolarized bodies was clear, however, and it appeared to many observers in and out of the Tunisian government that Achour had made his final choice of sides.

The long-anticipated confrontation between the government and the UGTT occurred on January 26 when a general strike was called as a warning to the government after the arrest of a union leader and alleged attacks on union offices in several towns. The strike was a show of force against the government and, by extension, against the whole political system Bourguiba had created. Many people were killed and injured on what became known as Black Thursday (Jeudi Noir) as workers and their supporters clashed with the police, army, and PSD militia. The scale of violence was unprecedented in independent Tunisia. A state of emergency was declared, an extended period of curfew was imposed, and hundreds of people were arrested, including Achour and ten other members of the thirteen-member UGTT executive bureau (see Threats to Internal Security, ch. 5).

The government officially viewed the strike as a premeditated attempt to incite a general rebellion against the state and alleged

that stocks of weapons had been found in the UGTT's Tunis headquarters. It was announced, however, that Achour and others would be tried in the general court system rather than by the State Security Court. The trials began in July 1978. In August the court of appeal at Susah declared that the case was outside its jurisdiction and should be tried in the State Security Court. A new progovernment UGTT leader and executive bureau were installed at a special trade union congress held in February (see Interest Groups, this ch.). Many of those involved in the Black Thursday violence were youths in their early twenties or younger. In March the government announced its intention to create a special institution known as the Civilian Service (Service Civile), which would conscript unemployed youths between the ages of eighteen and thirty for work projects that lacked needed manpower. Some early press reports interpreted the Civilian Service as evidence of government repression, but subsequent observers suggested that it might be more an attempt to defuse the problem of chronic unemployment among the young.

With order reestablished after Black Thursday, legitimacy and stability again revolved around the question of President Bourguiba's health. In late summer 1978 there were conflicting reports on the subject, some stating that Bourguiba was enjoying relatively good health, others that his health was failing. Speculation continued regarding not only who would succeed him but also what changes might be expected in the overall political system. "I have created the state around myself and my personality . . . I do not know if those who will come after me will be able to continue along the same path," Bourguiba stated in 1972. Indeed, the form that state eventually would take without its Supreme Combatant was unclear.

Presidential Succession

Much of the continuing dissension within the PSD and elsewhere during the early 1970s was over the issue of presidential succession. Succession was a major factor in the stability and institutionalization of the political system and as an indicator of the regime's liberalization and democratization. Bourguiba has mentioned the succession issue on several occasions. In a 1972 interview with the British press, for example, he stated: "It is not easy to replace a man like me. . . . There is, between the Tunisian people and me, forty years of life passed together, of common hardships endured together, which will not exist with the person who comes after me."

The original text of the 1959 Constitution provided that in the case of a presidential vacancy, members of the government would choose one of their number as acting president. Within five weeks the National Assembly would elect a new president. Bourguiba wished to reduce this period and minimize the potential for instability. In 1966 he requested that the National Assembly revise the Constitution to confer upon the just-created Council of the Repub-

lic the power to select an acting president. Within three days the assembly would elect someone to fill the unexpired term of the previous president. The assembly accepted this plan, but Bourguiba later changed his position and rejected the scheme, still searching for a swifter and more automatic succession procedure.

In 1969 Bourguiba created by decree the position of prime minister and requested that the assembly revise the Constitution so the prime minister (an appointed official) would fill the unexpired term of a vacated presidency. The Constitution was so revised, but the issue was not settled because the liberal faction of the PSD was pressing for political reforms, including a democratization of the presidential succession process.

In large part because of Ben Salah's accumulation of power, which ended only with his political demise in 1969, Bourguiba was interested in limiting any successor's power as president. In 1970 he appointed a special party commission to study the political system and recommend ways of giving the National Assembly some control over the executive. The commission completed its work the next year, recommending a constitutional revision that would make the prime minister responsible to the National Assembly through a censure motion. The revision also would have provided for the popularly elected president of the assembly to assume the duties of the president of the republic if a vacancy occurred, with popular elections for a new president to be called within a month.

Bourguiba did not act immediately on the commission's recommendations. Not long before the 1971 party congress he stated that "speculations and intrigues concerning the succession are inopportune and premature." Based on his preference for succession by a proven administrator and his growing confidence in Nouira, Bourguiba continued to favor presidential succession by the prime minister rather than by the assembly president. The party congress suggested that Bourguiba assume the presidency of the republic for life, a plan he rejected because of his intention to retire at the end of his third term in 1974. As part of its attempt to establish the practice of electing rather than appointing high officials, the congress adopted a draft constitutional revision whereby succession to the presidency would be based on universal suffrage.

In 1972 the party's Political Bureau resurrected an idea, rejected by Bourguiba two years earlier, that an elective office of vice president be created, its holder to be first in the line of succession should the presidency become vacant. Bourguiba again rejected the plan, in part because a vice president, together with a president and a prime minister, was seen as administratively excessive in such a small country.

In 1974 the PSD congress reversed its 1971 recommendation and approved the prime minister's succession to the presidency should that office become vacant. Bourguiba reversed his earlier

President Habib Bourguiba (right)
and Prime Minister Hedi Nouira
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

Tunisians
at the polls
Courtesy Embassy
of Tunisia

decision and ran—again unopposed—for a fourth consecutive presidential term later in the year. In December the National Assembly approved on first reading a constitutional revision proclaiming Bourguiba president of the republic for life. The revision was adopted on second reading on March 18, 1975. Bourguiba thereafter publicly confirmed, as he has done on several other occasions, that Nouira would be his successor. The formal succession procedure was completed in April 1976 when additional constitutional revisions specified the line of succession after the prime minister and made a post-Bourguiba president eligible for an unlimited number of five-year terms (see Executive, this ch.).

Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism

Tunisia's philosophical and political heritage is a synthesis of the predominant values of earlier historical periods. The virtues of continuity, order, and stability developed in the period of Punic mercantilism. Roman law and custom, administered by a strong central government, reinforced the Punic political and mercantilistic values. Islam—particularly the urban strain of Islam in Tunisia—also valued mercantilism and order, and it added the virtues of moderation, piety, and frugality. The beylical system provided another centralized political structure. The colonial period reaffirmed Tunisia's ties with the West and imparted both liberal humanitarian and some authoritarian values contained in French political philosophy. Most members of the Tunisian political elite, including Bourguiba, are French educated.

Bourguiba believes the development of contemporary Tunisia revolves around his person. Most observers agree, however, that at least during the first few years of independence Bourguiba did not regard himself as the incarnation of the Tunisian nation or the personification of the Tunisian version of Jean Jacques Rousseau's concept of the general will. As political scientist Wilfrid Knapp has explained, Bourguiba did consider himself as the "agent who brought his country to independence and beyond, as a model whom others could emulate." Critics have faulted Bourguiba far more often for the vanity and egotism contained in his view of his relationship to the nation than for its basic veracity.

Bourguiba's political views combine pragmatism and idealism. His basic method, called the step-by-step (*étape par étape*) approach or the policy of states (*politique des étapes*) is based on gradualism, pragmatism, and rationalism. It includes the objective appraisal of a given situation coupled with the setting of realistic, attainable objectives that aim toward an ultimate goal. Thus, during the anticolonial struggle, Bourguiba was willing to negotiate with the French for limited concessions that would eventually lead to full independence.

Central to Bourguiba's political philosophy are his views of man and the state. He sees man as basically good, cooperative, and subject to reason. Bourguiba prefers to persuade or convince his political opponents rather than coerce them into acceptance of his

views or policies. An individual who is not persuaded can expect to be removed from any position of power he might hold. Yet, lacking vindictiveness and believing man rational, and wishing to avoid wasting talent, Bourguiba often has reappointed to power those former opponents who came to recognize the validity of his arguments. Indeed, many high government officials, including some cabinet ministers, have gone through just such a disciplinary and rehabilitative process as many as three or more times.

Bourguiba believes in the evolutionary improvement (if not perfection) of human nature. His objective is the "promotion of man." During the early years of the republic he frequently used the media to exhort his countrymen to adopt those views and habits necessary for the development of dignity and moral improvement. If man were to devote himself to higher aspirations, traditional social and religious restraints, as well as those imposed by material need, had to be eliminated. Thus Bourguiba embarked on postindependence campaigns that advocated women's emancipation, opposed *habus* property holding and other conservative aspects of Islam, and established the goal of modernization through economic development. Yet the final goal was not merely material well-being, nor was it some utopian paradise. It was the achievement of human dignity and moral excellence.

Bourguiba believes that the state has a positive role in encouraging human betterment and in removing those conditions that impede it. He considers democracy to be both a virtue and a goal; yet complete democracy cannot be implemented where the populace is uneducated and politically unsophisticated. A more limited or "guided democracy" must prevail until the people have been trained in citizenship and have gained political maturity. The training and guidance were to be provided by a small minority of party members, who would contribute to the elaboration of decisions and policies made at the highest levels of state and party. They would, in effect, form an elite group of political tutors for the masses. Bourguiba does not equate democracy with pluralism. As political scientist John P. Entelis has written, Bourguiba stresses "the unitary nature of Tunisian society [which] serves to justify a monolithic political structure and the exercise of power on the basis of unanimity." Entelis noted that inherent in Bourguiba's emphasis on unanimity is an "authoritarian streak . . . reminiscent of Rousseau's view of the organic character of the community."

The combination of Bourguiba's pragmatic methodology, philosophy, and ethics often is referred to as Bourguibism (sometimes seen as Bourguibaism). Nouira underscored its importance in a January 14, 1978, interview in which he responded to questions on the subject of Tunisia after the passing of Bourguiba. He was emphatic in his contention that this period would not be one of "post-Bourguibism":

> It is totally unacceptable to talk of post-Bourguibaism . . . there is no such thing. . . . The Bourguibaism we now have will remain. . . . Bourguibaism is an ethic, a way of seeing things, of acting, thinking, shaping and reshaping. Bourguibaism will last as long as Tunisia for its ethic is imprinted on Tunisia.

Bourguibism is the basis for what Knapp has termed "an ethos which stops short of an ideology." Indeed, in Bourguiba's opinion the achievement of practical results is far more important than ideology, which he believes serves primarily to provide scapegoats and excuses for failure. In June 1961, however, Bourguiba introduced Destourian socialism, a combination of Bourguibism in a somewhat formalized form and the concept of centralized state economic planning and intervention, a combination some observers have described as an ideology.

According to Bourguiba, the goal of Destourian socialism is "the good of all"; the method is "that of solidarity and association as members of one family united in all circumstances." As for the state, it "sees beyond the individual [and] must intervene for the sake of national solidarity." A specific concomitant to the broad idea of the general good was that of social responsibility in property ownership. Bourguiba stated: "Modern life cannot possibly allow unlimited freedom. The idea of absolute ownership, which leads to abusive administration, has had its day." In short, neither private property nor a reasonable profit derived from it was to be disallowed, but the misuse or underutilization of private property to the detriment of the whole community would not be permitted.

Destourian socialism was unique or original, in Bourguiba's words, "based on the objective realities of our country," and it was adaptive rather than dogmatic, what he called "a continuous creation." In stressing its originality, Bourguiba rejected any contention that Destourian socialism need be justified on the basis of historical precedents. No imported ideology would be applicable to the Tunisian case; this was particularly true of Marxism. Marxism was applicable to industrialized societies; Tunisia was a relatively underdeveloped, agricultural society. Where Karl Marx stressed class warfare, Bourguiba emphasized national unanimity. To Bourguiba the issue was not how the proletariat could overthrow the bourgeoisie but how the individual could be educated so as gradually to evolve from an obsession with his immediate personal interests to contributing to the good of the community and to human betterment. Interestingly enough, while rejecting historical ideological precedents for Destourian socialism, Bourguiba did attempt to establish a connection between it and Islam. He stated that the followers of the Prophet during the first century of Islam "were socialists before the invention of the word and considered themselves as members of the same family. They were not individualists, not one among them sought enrichment at the expense of the others. All worked for the common good."

Together with the general role of the state in fostering the good of all, there were practical reasons for Destourian socialism's incorporation of the concept of centralized state economic planning and intervention. The economic structures of production and distribution inherited from the colonial period were inefficient and predicated on the exploitation of one class by another. The traditional forms of agricultural production and landholding (including *habus* property) were also inefficient. Thus, the economic system had to be changed. It was not enough, however, merely to destroy the obstacles to development and modernization; the economy required stimulation, coordination, and regulation through state intervention. With collectivization the state moved from regulation of a private economy toward control of a public one. Because of Destourian socialism's inherent adaptability, however, when it appeared that the cooperative approach had become counterproductive, the state could revert to regulating a predominantly private economy that increasingly emphasized domestic capitalism and foreign investment.

In its etatism, elitism, gradualism, view of man, emphasis on planning, and ultimate goal, Destourian socialism very much resembles British Fabian socialism. Whether it actually constitutes an ideology is subject to debate. The important point is that in the case of Tunisia it performs the same function as an ideology. That function, according to one scholar, is to supply "the lubricant for developing societies." Another noted academician, Charles A. Micaud, wrote that to a modernizing regime an ideology "helps clarify long term objectives and justify the methods used in their implementation." Furthermore, it establishes a system of norms on which to judge performance and lends "a sense of continuity and rationality" to what seem to be "unrelated and arbitrary innovations." Destourian socialism did these things and thus, in Micaud's words, provided "a legitimizing rationale for consensus building."

Destourian Socialist Party

In 1920 the Destour (Constitution) Party was created as part of the nationalist movement. Bourguiba and others broke from the Destour Party and in 1934 formed the Neo-Destour Party, which led the successful independence struggle against the French. With the acceptance of Destourian socialism as Tunisia's national ideology, the name of the party was changed in 1964 to the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD) (see Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism, this ch.).

The party, in both its Neo-Destour and Destourian Socialist forms, has had no political rival. Since 1963, in fact, the PSD has been the only legal Tunisian political party. In 1964 the PSD National Council termed the party "the motor of the state," and in 1974 Bourguiba defined the state as "the instrument implementing the party's historical message." Scholars have been un-

able to resolve the question of whether it has been the party or the state that has been co-opted in their relationship.

The party's success in creating a genuinely broad, popular base of support in the struggle against France and its effective leadership during that conflict greatly contributed to its singular importance as a political organization. With independence achieved, the party was charged with tutoring the masses and providing the framework within which they could learn to participate in politics. As the government became increasingly involved in economic planning, the success of which depended on public support, a new impetus was given to the party's role as the mobilizer of the masses and as the vehicle through which the masses and their leaders could communicate.

Another important reason for the PSD's prominence and for the fusion and overlapping of party and state is Bourguiba's emphasis on a monolithic political structure based on unanimity among the citizenry. Where there is unanimity a multiparty system is unnecessary. As Habib Bourguiba, Jr., has explained "plurality of parties supposes a plurality of social antagonisms, a plurality of social [classes] which struggle among themselves for power before concluding in the continuation and consolidation of the interest of a particular class." But the PSD does not represent a special class or interest; it is supposed to be the "assembling point" through which a "national synthesis" of all interests is achieved.

Membership in the PSD is open to anyone who is not a member of another party, agrees to pay regular dues, and adheres to the party's principles. Total membership in 1974 was estimated to be over 400,000, but the party's ability to attract the young—particularly the educated young—appeared on the wane during the 1970s. The party's hierarchical structure, in ascending order of authority, comprises cells, circumscriptions, coordination committees, the National Congress, the National Council, the Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the party director and secretary general, and the president of the party.

In 1974 there were about 1,400 cells, sometimes referred to as branches. Fifty party members are required to form a cell, which was originally organized on a geographical or territorial basis depending on where its members resided. In 1964 a distinction was made between territorial and professional cells, the professional cells comprising those people in a given area who have similar occupations or who work in a particular factory. The creation of professional party cells was not welcomed by organized labor. In 1976 still another kind of cell, comprising graduating students, was created in the secondary schools of the governorate of Tunis. Party cells have also been established among Tunisian immigrant workers, particularly in France. The cells lack the secrecy of many European communist and socialist party counterparts. Their meetings are often open to the general public. Local direction of the cell is the responsibility of an executive committee

of ten to twelve members, elected by and from the whole cell membership. A president heads the executive committee.

Above the cell is the circumscription, which is organized on the basis of the delegations within each governorate (see Subnational Government, this ch.). The circumscription coordinates the activities of the various cells; the presidents of the cells are included among the members of the circumscription's executive committee. The most important subnational party unit is the coordination committee, one of which is located in each governorate. The coordination committees serve as the major communications link between the local party base and the national party authorities. The coordination committee is headed by a secretary general (appointed by the Political Bureau), who is the chief political assistant to the governor. The governor directs the party at the governorate or regional level.

The National Congress, comprising several hundred specially elected delegates and usually held every five years, is the party's highest formal authority. In practice it has proved to be more a consultative and advisory body that approves the policies introduced by the party executive, the government, and the president of the republic. The National Council functions as an interim congress between regular meetings. The National Congress elects sixty members of the Central Committee, which assists the party president in determining general policies. Also on the Central Committee are members of the government (ministers and secretaries of state), governors, and secretaries general of the party coordination committees.

The Political Bureau functions as the party's executive board. There are twenty bureau members, who are selected from among the Central Committee membership by the party president. Always on the bureau are the party's secretary general and assistant secretary general, posts filled by the prime minister and the minister of the interior, respectively. Day-to-day executive power is held by the director of the party, who since 1964 has been Mohamed Sayah. The highest position is that of president of the party, a post thus far filled exclusively by Bourguiba. The 1974 National Congress proclaimed Bourguiba president of the party for life.

Other important PSD organs include a disciplinary commission and a party militia. The disciplinary commission judges infractions against party rules committed by members of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau. Local counterparts perform the same function for members of coordination committees and cells. Little is known about the PSD militia, whose existence has not been acknowledged publicly (see Threats to Internal Security, ch. 5).

In June 1978 Premier Nouira assigned to Hedi Baccouche the special mission of rejuvenating the PSD. As governor of Safaqis during the 1960s, Baccouche supported Ben Salah's collectivization policy and was a codefendant of the former planning and finance department head at his trial in 1970. Before his temporary

political demise, Baccouche had served as an official of the Federation of Destourian Students in France and as secretary general of the Destourian Youth organization (see Students and Youth, this ch.).

Interest Groups

Because of the emphasis on national unanimity, groups representing special interests are not recognized in Tunisia. Instead, several national organizations have been established to promote national unity by mobilizing support for the government from various segments of the population. Most of the organizations were created during the independence struggle to contribute to the resistance effort against the French. All of the organizations enjoy autonomy from the PSD. Since independence their mission has been to rally support for the national goal of promoting man through social modernization and economic development.

Students and Youth

The university student organization, the General Union of Tunisian Students (Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens—UGET), was founded clandestinely in 1952 by the Neo-Destour Party. Its branches among Tunisian students in foreign countries, especially in France, have been a major source of radical influence within the organization. An autonomous group despite its historical connection with the party, the UGET was generally united before independence, and it made significant contributions to the fight against the French. For some time after independence it was a strong supporter of most of Bourguiba's domestic social and economic policies, although it opposed him on such foreign policy issues as the Tunisian contribution to the 1960 United Nations (UN) Congo intervention and support for United States involvement in Vietnam during the 1960s.

In 1971 the government replaced the UGET executive bureau, elected by the student organization's national congress, with a pro-PSD faction more to its liking. Leftists and other regime opponents subsequently established an unofficial rival executive body, the Provisional University Committee. By the mid-1970s the contest for control of the UGET was overshadowed by increasing student dissatisfaction with the government over a broad range of issues. Frequent strikes and demonstrations were staged to protest such things as the legal prosecution of students who had been involved in earlier demonstrations or who were accused of membership in Marxist-Leninist groups, the 1973 revocation of student military draft deferments, examination policies, and placement of security guards (called monitors) in classrooms. Students also demonstrated in support of union activities and were reported to have staged a solidarity strike in conjunction with labor's January 1978 general strike.

Some observers have seen in the rising discontent among students the most serious threat to the perpetuation of the politi-

cal and social system created by Bourguiba. It was the educated young who were to be the system's cadre. During the late 1950s and 1960s most scholars believed that the young were responding positively to the regime's socialization processes. By the early 1970s, however, some contrary data had been accumulated. Based on surveys of Tunisian university-level students, Entelis concluded in 1972 that there was a "widespread sense of disaffection among Tunisian youth toward the system's ethical and judgement norms, institutional arrangements, political practices, and elitist behavior." A significant amount of student discontent appears related to the lack of postgraduation employment opportunities. As Entelis noted,"it appears that the elite's mobilization of the educated young towards modernist goals has been extended beyond the regime's distributive capabilities and resources."

The UGET's autonomy caused the PSD to establish in 1963 a rival, party-associated group, the National Federation of Destourian Students (Fédération Nationale des Etudiants Destouriens—FNED), later changed to the National Federation of Destourian Socialist Students. The executive organ is the National Bureau of Destourian Socialist Students. The party also has an organization for secondary-school students, School Youth, and for nonstudents or young people in general, Destourian Youth. Destourian Youth dates back to the 1930s; its primary purpose is to train future party members in good citizenship and effective leadership. Since 1965 the activities of the various PSD student and youth groups have been coordinated by a party administrative organ called the Tunisian Youth Union (Union Tunisienne de la Jeunesse—UTJ). Still another party group, the Pioneers of the Republic (created in 1963 and composed of separate subgroups for young people in rural areas, factories, and the civil service) operated under the UJT in the 1960s, but whether it continued to function by the mid-1970s was unclear.

Organized Labor

In 1946 Ferhat Hached, who later became a national martyr in the fight for independence, led other Tunisian members out of the communist-dominated French labor organization, the CGT, to form the UGTT. Briefly affiliated with the communist World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the UGTT soon developed close ties with the American labor movement and became affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Despite its name, the UGTT is actually a federation comprising several member unions. After Hached's 1952 assassination by French colonial terrorists, Ben Salah directed the UGTT toward the adoption of strongly socialist economic policies. When Ben Salah began to challenge government policies, a split was encouraged within the UGTT, which resulted in the division of that organization and the formation of the Tunisian Workers Union (Union des Travailleurs Tunisiens—UTT). During its brief existence the UTT, backed by the government, was led by Achour. His position weakened by the division in the labor movement, Ben

Salah was forced from the UGTT leadership. After the government's adoption of his basic economic views a few years later, Ben Salah became the secretary of state for planning and finance (see Major Political Developments, this ch.).

The official relationship between the UGTT and the government and party remained generally cooperative into the early 1970s. By 1973, however, there was some indication that the UGTT leadership under Achour did not have full control of the organization's members, as nonsanctioned or wildcat strikes began to proliferate. The UGTT claimed a total membership of 650,000 in 1978. Union strikes culminated in the Black Thursday confrontation with the government in January of that year (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). After the arrests of Achour and other union leaders, Tijani Abid was appointed to the post of UGTT secretary general. Abid and a new executive bureau were formally installed in late February by a special UGTT congress. The congress adopted a motion that deeply regretted the recent "deviationism in the union's conduct," for which it attributed responsibility to the former leaders. It also reaffirmed the union's commitment to the social pact (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). The national labor organizations in Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Mauritania criticized the special UGTT congress and demanded the release of the UGTT's former leaders and other Tunisian trade unionists. The ICFTU and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity also requested the release of the trade unionists. The unionists' subsequent trials drew criticism from several West European labor federations, including the major national trade union organizations in France and Italy.

Women

The national women's organization, the National Union of Tunisian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes—UNFT), was founded in 1956. Local branches of the UNFT teach civics, reading and general education courses, hygiene and family planning, and more traditional skills such as sewing. They also help in operating nurseries and participate in disease eradication programs. The UNFT is much less a political organization than the UGET or the UGTT.

The emancipation of women has always been of major importance to Bourguiba. The Personal Status Code of 1956 did much to place women on an equal social and economic level with men (see The Individual, the Family, and the Sexes, ch. 2). Women voted for the first time in local elections in 1957 and have enjoyed full political rights since then. Some Arab-Islamic traditions can be modified only gradually, however, and women as a group were not politically active as late as the mid-1970s. A few women did hold party and government positions at all levels.

One of the the more politically active women at the national level was Radhia Haddad, the founder and former president of the national women's organization and a former National Assembly

deputy and PSD Central Committee members. In 1974 she was dismissed from these posts and given a suspended prison sentence for alleged financial mismanagement within the women's organization. Haddad subsequently claimed that she was the victim of persecution because of her support for liberal critics of the regime. She was one of the signers of a 1976 manifesto issued by Mestiri's liberal PSD faction that demanded free opposition expression, democratization of political and economic institutions, and revision of the single-party political system.

The president's wife, Wassila Bourguiba, is another nationally known woman who is said to follow political developments closely. Although she remains in the background, the Western press frequently comments on her keen interest in domestic Tunisian politics. In July 1978 the *London Financial Times* reported that Mrs. Bourguiba was reputed to support Belkhodja, who was dismissed as interior minister in December 1977, and Chatti, who resigned as foreign minister to protest Belkhodja's dismissal. The Belkhodja-Chatti faction is said to oppose the faction favored by Bourguiba, whose leaders include Prime Minister Nouira and PSD Director Sayah (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). Mrs. Bourguiba has also met with political leaders during trips to foreign countries.

Other Organizations

Other national organizations have been established for businessmen and craftsmen, farmers, and the family. The Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce, and Handicraft (Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce, et de l'Artisant—UTICA) was founded in 1946 as the Tunisian Union of Merchants and Artisans. The National Union of Tunisian Farmers (Union Nationale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens—UNAT) was formed in 1955. The newest national organization, the Tunisian Organization for Education and the Family, was created in 1969. All of the groups are called upon to support the government and the party and to contribute to the modernization effort, but none was performing a significant political role in mid-1978.

Opposition

In mid-1978 there were five broad categories of opposition movements. These included left-of-center reformers often referred to in the Western press as social democrats or liberals; the further-left, socialist Movement of Popular Unity (Mouvement d'Unité Populaire—MUP); the traditional Marxist left, represented by the Tunisian Communist Party (Parti Communiste Tunisien—PCT); the extreme left, which included radical Marxists and Marxist-Leninists, Trotskyites, Maoists, and various pan-Arab or pan-Maghribi Nasserites, Baathists, and followers of the late Salah Ben Youssef; and a small, right-wing religious group. Most of the extreme leftist groups were based outside of Tunisia; some of the revolutionary movements were headed by Tunisians living in vari-

ous Arab countries, and Paris is the home of a plethora of Marxist-Leninist study groups, which are particularly active among the Tunisian immigrant worker and student communities in France. Some also operate in Tunisia. The revolutionary movements and student-worker study groups couch much of their condemnation of the Bourguiba regime in class terms, decrying what they see as the continuing development and solidification in Tunisia or a rich, elite class at the expense of the masses.

Liberals

Ahmed Mestiri, the primary leader of the liberal element within the PSD, was expelled from the party in 1972, having been accused of causing disruptive factionalism. Other leading PSD liberals, including several former government ministers, were purged from the party in 1974 (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). The liberals have remained politically active, however, and have issued numerous open letters, declarations, and petitions criticizing the single-party system and calling for the democratization and liberalization of the regime. They generally support the ideal of Maghribi unity but lack the pan-Arab ideological overtones of many of the groups further to the left on the political spectrum. The liberals and the groups to their political left supported self-determination for the Western Sahara (formerly Spanish Sahara), which Bourguiba opposed (see Foreign Relations, this ch.). The liberals are reformists who wish to work within the system to accomplish its modification. They are careful not to criticize the president personally, and they accept the general tenets and values of Bourguibism. Regarding economics, they advocate a mixed economy with a larger socialist or public sector. Critics claim that the liberals come mainly from the bourgeoisie and lack popular support.

In April 1977 more than 160 liberals, including Mestiri and other former cabinet ministers, appealed to Bourguiba to end the deterioration of civil liberties and called for the convocation of a national conference for the same purpose. The conference, scheduled for June, was banned by the authorities. Some meetings were held, however, and a new body, the National Council for the Defense of Public Liberties (Conseil National pour la Défense des Libertés Publiques-CNDLP) was formed. The CNDLP is not to be confused with the Tunisian League for the Rights of Man, led by Saadeddin Zmerli and officially sanctioned in May 1977. The league was formed by another element of the broad group of liberals, and it intended to seek affiliation with the Brussels-based International Federation for the Rights of Man.

In October 1977 Mestiri proposed a National Pact to be signed by representatives of all political trends and movements working within the constitutional system that would guarantee the freedom of political activity. The preamble of the pact, however, was highly critical of the one-party system and the ruling regime. Prime Minister Nouira, in an April 1978 speech before the National

Assembly, emphatically rejected the National Pact concept and attacked the liberal opposition as a "rejectionist front" that adopted only negative stands on important national issues.

In June 1978 Mestiri announced his intention to form a political party, to be called the Movement of Social Democrats. The prospective party's executive board did not include many of Mestiri's long-time liberal colleagues, such as Essebsi and Ben Ammar. Although these men did not join the new political organization, Ben Ammar did become the publisher of its newspaper. It was considered unlikely that the government would grant the party the official sanction required to make it a legal organization. In April Mestiri was called before the senior magistrate of the court of first instance in Tunis to answer charges of defaming the regime and propagating false news regarding the events of January 26. Mestiri had called for a commission of inquiry to determine the identify of those involved in the demonstrations and riots and of those who gave permission to the troops to open fire. Despite the court proceedings, Mestiri remained free, and he continued to publicly criticize the government into the early summer.

Movement of Popular Unity

The MUP, formed in 1973 and based in Paris, continued in 1978 to be headed by the former secretary of state for planning and finance, Ahmed Ben Salah. Other leaders included his close associates Slimane Douggi, Hichem Moussa, and Abdel Qader Zouori. The groups's manifesto, *Towards a New Tunisia,* was published in June 1975. MUP advocates a total socialist economy and does not hesitate to criticize Bourguiba personally. Its view of the domestic situation is much like those of more extreme leftist groups and was illustrated in Ben Salah's speech before a meeting of third world economists in Algeria in 1976. Ben Salah stated that "since 1970 . . . [Tunisia] has been ruled by a reactionary authority that is . . . imposing on our people what it alleges to be 'development' which, in fact, is a development of capitalistic and colonialist nature and whose benefits will accrue to a minority of the lucky ones." In 1977 MUP called for the formation of a transitional government that would organize free parliamentary elections. MUP denied, however, that it advocated change through coup d'etat or military putsch. Although MUP generally feels that the liberals are victims of the regime they would only reform, Ben Salah gave qualified support to the proposed June 1977 civil liberties conference.

Tunisian Communist Party

The PCT was founded in 1920 as part of the French Communist Party (Parti Communiste Français—PCF) and became independent in 1934. Proscribed in 1963, it continues to function in a limited, clandestine fashion. Its leaders in 1978 included Mohamed Ennafaa, Mohamed Hormal, and Abdellamid Ben Mustapha. The PCT is recognized by the Soviet Union, and it takes a

pro-Soviet, anti-Maoist stance in foreign affairs. It remains aloof from the more extreme leftist groups, which consider it ineffective or even bourgeois. Membership in the PCT in 1978 probably numbered fewer than 300, but the party was influential in some university circles. The French publication *Afrique-Asie* reported that the PCT joined MUP in organizing a meeting in support of the Tunisian labor movement before Black Thursday. If true, the joint effort apparently did not reflect a long-term alliance between the two groups.

Extreme Left

Information covering the extreme left is sketchy and often is contained in brief reports on political trials being conducted in Tunisia. Many groups have similar names and policies, and some are no doubt confused with others or are referred to by different names when covered in the Western press. Most of the groups are small, and none appears to have any mass following in Tunisia.

Since the early 1970s the revolutionary opposition movements and leftist worker-student study groups have proliferated. Examples of the revolutionary movements include the Tunisian Nationalist Movement, which claimed responsibility for the January 29, 1978, bombing of the Tunisian embassy in Beirut; the National Tunisian Democratic Front, established in Morocco in 1962 by followers of Ben Youssef; the Union of Tunisian People's Forces and the National Progressive Front for the Liberation of Tunisia, both apparently founded in or operating from Libya; and the Tunisian National Resistance, based in Algeria. Mahrey Saadawi, the secretary general of the Tunisian Progressive National Front (Front National Progressiste Tunisien—FNPT), was shot and seriously wounded in Damascus in August 1977. The FNPT comprises the Nasserite Arab Socialist Union of Tunisia (Union Socialiste Arabe de Tunisie—USAT), the Baathist Arab Socialist Movement of Tunisia (Mouvement Socialiste Arabe de Tunisie—MSAT), and followers of the late Ben Youssef.

American political scientist Stuart H. Schaar reported the existence of six or seven Maoist groups. Among the many other student-worker study groups are the Tunisian Marxist-Leninist Group, formed in 1970; Echo'la, another Marxist-Leninist group that is said to be particularly active among Tunisian immigrant workers in France; the Tunisian Socialist Study and Action Group, formed in Paris in 1964, some of whose members were tried in Tunis in 1974; the Socialist Work and Study Collective, a Paris-based group that reportedly emerged from a split in the Committee of the Student Union in Paris and apparently has formed Marxist-Leninist study groups and cells in Tunisia; and the Paris-based 26 January Collective, which comprises representatives from different Tunisian opposition movements and which denounced the "puppet" union federation after the UGTT's special congress in February 1978 (see Interest Groups, this ch.). The members of two additional left-wing groups, Tunisian Perspec-

tives and the Tunisian Worker, are clustered around publications of the same name, which are based in Paris. In September 1972 forty Tunisian university students and teachers identified with Tunisian Perspectives were tried in Tunis. The Tunisian Worker is said to be active among Tunisian students, young factory workers, and young civil servants. Testimony at trials in Tunis in the fall of 1975 indicated that some members of the Tunisian Worker had received training from George Habash's Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The Tunisian Worker and Tunisian Perspectives may be subgroups of, or otherwise associated with, the Tunisian Socialist Study and Action Group.

Other Groups

There is at least one reactionary right-wing group, similar to the Muslim Brotherhood, that was having some effect on Tunisian politics in 1978. The unnamed group is led by an individual whom Schaar identified as Sheikh Mourou. It has won major concessions from the government, including the right to preach in the mosques and to run religious schools. According to Schaar, the group was actively recruiting members among secondary school and university students. In late August 1977 unidentified groups attacked café patrons in Safaqis in the belief that alcoholic beverages were being served during Ramadan. Similar incidents have been reported in the past and have been attributed to conservative Muslim groups.

A factor of undetermined importance in mid-1978 was one that involved the small number of apparently unorganized followers of former Foreign Minister Mohamed Masmoudi. Masmoudi returned to Tunisia in December 1977 after nearly four years of self-imposed exile; his tenure as foreign minister had ended shortly after he engineered the ill-fated 1974 Tunisian-Libyan union. He was quoted in December 1977 as saying that the trade unions were Tunisia's primary organizations and that political movements should be organized around them, both to encourage the orderly negotiation of their demands and because they would be the major force for stability in the political vacuum that would be left when Bourguiba was no longer president. After the January 1978 labor-government confrontation Masmoudi called for revision of the Constitution, the guarantee of political freedom, and the establishment of the principle of rotation among government officials. He allegedly hinted that if "repression" continued, neighboring Arab countries would not remain idle in the struggle.

Politics and the Media

The communications media, both print and broadcast, are of considerable political significance in Tunisia. President Bourguiba wrote for the old Destour Party's newspaper, *La Voix du Tunisien*, and in 1930 founded his own paper, *L'Action Tunisienne*. The French banned all Tunisian nationalist newspapers in 1933.

Several of the national organizations produce publications for their members that combine general education and information with articles favorable toward the government and solicitous of the readers' support for its policies (see table 13, Appendix). Among the PSD's publications are its two daily newspapers, *L'Action* and *Al Amal* (*Al Amal* is Arabic for *Action*, and the newspaper is published in that language). The UGTT publication *Ech Chaab* (also transliterated as *Ach Chaab*, *Al Shaab*, and *El Chaab*) became highly critical of the government during 1976 but adopted a pro-government line after the January 1978 labor-government confrontation and the subsequent change in the union executive (see Major Political Developments; Interest Groups, this ch.).

The leading independent newspapers are *Essabah* (also transliterated as *Al Sabah* and *Assabah*), *Le Temps*, and *Jeune Afrique* (an African coverage magazine published in Paris but with a significant Tunisian circulation). They venture at times into mild-to-moderate criticism of the government, but they do not constitute an opposition press. The French daily newspaper *Le Monde*, published in Paris, is especially popular among better educated Tunisians. In 1975 total daily newspaper circulation was estimated at 107,000 copies. The total circulation of nondaily newspapers and periodicals was estimated at 59,000 and 283,000 copies respectively. Circulation was nearly equally divided between French and Arabic publications. Readership of Arabic publications is significantly greater than indicated by circulation figures, for such printed matter is usually shared among several readers, particularly in the hinterland. Almost all domestic publishing is done in Tunis.

No official censorship was imposed into the late 1960s, but self-censorship existed in the form of what one observer has called "a clear consciousness among journalists and editors of what can be published and what cannot." By the mid-1970s official oversight had become more vigorous. A new press code adopted in April 1975 required all persons managing or financing publications in Tunisia to be Tunisian citizens. The code specified that press criticism of public authorities was permissible if it were undertaken in the general interest and could be corroborated. The press code also stipulated penalties (including jail terms) for those who defame the state or its leaders. The Higher Council of Information, created in 1973 and presided over by the secretary of state for information, establishes guidelines regarding the acceptable content of all media.

Events involving the press have been indicative of the regime's difficulty in dealing with nonconformity—even within the PSD, which is supposed to function as a framework within which unanimity is created from diversity. With considerable fanfare the party began publishing in 1974 a French-language weekly entitled *Dialogue*. In 1976 the editor of *Dialogue* resigned, stating that it had "become impossible to present the subject matter implied by

the very title of the review" and lamenting the lack of "pluralism of opinion" within the PSD.

Attempts to establish a genuine opposition press have met with little success. In September 1976 a liberal colleague of Mestiri, Hasib Ben Ammar, requested permission to publish a weekly newspaper in Arabic to be titled *Ar Rai* (also transliterated as *Errai*). Permission was not granted until October 1977. Publication was begun in December, but permission to print the February 1, 1978, issue was denied. Some sources have indicated that *Ar Rai* has since published articles very critical of the government without interruption by the authorities, but there have also been subsequent reports of street vendors being subjected to harassment when attempting to sell copies of the newspaper. In May Ben Ammar was charged with defamation of the army and placed on trial before military authorities in Tunis. The action apparently involved the publication in January 1978 of a letter from a reader who criticized army intervention in the October 1977 factory strike at Qasr Hellal (see Major Political Developments, this ch.). Ben Ammar also had received permission in January 1978 to publish a second newspaper, *Démocratie*. The first issue was produced in June, and the publication was seen as the probable organ of Mestiri's new Movement of Social Democrats political party.

The broadcast media have been a state monopoly since independence. They are administered by a public corporation, Tunisian Radio and Television (Radiodiffusion Télévision Tunisienne—RTT), under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Information. The broadcast media have played a particularly significant role in attempts to educate and modernize the public and to win support for government policies. For several years after independence Bourguiba frequently used the broadcast media to exhort the public to be good citizens and to school its members in various facets of Bourguibism. The president's recognition of the political importance of the broadcast media was formalized in 1964, when he appointed the director of the RTT to the PSD Political Bureau.

Foreign Relations

In a 1976 interview with the Spanish press Prime Minister Nouira summarized his country's foreign policy when he stated that "Tunisia is a geographical link among the north (that is, Europe), the east (that is, the Middle East) and the south (that is, the African countries). Our policy must harmonize these geographical coordinates in both the economic and the political fields." Foreign policy has concentrated on relations with Maghribi neighbors. Tunisia maintains a tradition of friendship with the West but also adheres to the principle of nonalignment. It sent representatives to the 1955 Bandung (Indonesia) Conference of Afro-Asian countries and reaffirmed its membership in the nonaligned movement at the 1961 Belgrade Conference. The case involving the Western Sahara territory represents an exception to Tunisia's usual support for the principle of self-determination.

Tunisia has followed a policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries, although it has given diplomatic support to several independence movements. Despite a moderate attitude regarding Israel, Tunisia has been a firm advocate of the rights of Palestinian Arabs and recognizes the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as their sole representative body.

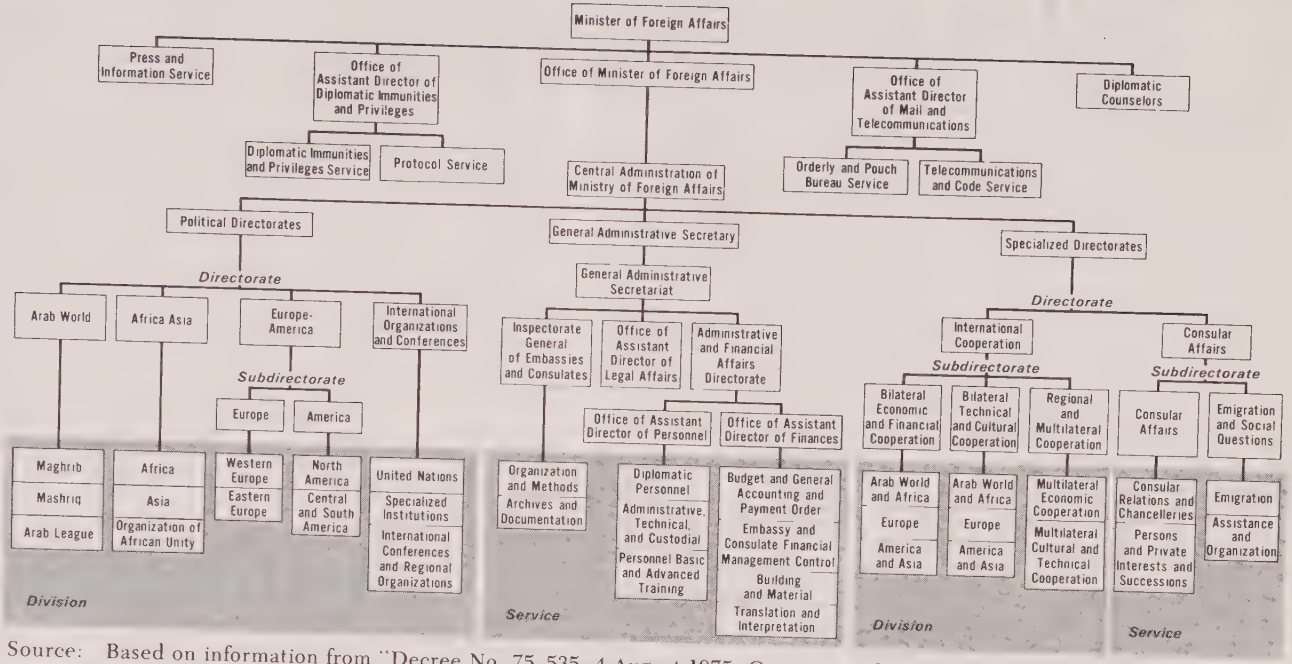
Foreign policy is under the general guidance of President Bourguiba and the supervision of Prime Minister Nouira. The foreign minister contributes to policy formulation and directs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The well-organized foreign ministry comprises political and specialized directorates as well as an administrative directorate (see fig. 12). The political directorates are geographically based: Arab world, Africa-Asia, Europe-America, and international organizations and conferences. The specialized directorates are oriented toward bilateral and multilateral economic and financial cooperation and technical and cultural cooperation.

Maghribi Relations

The Constitution proclaims Tunisia to be "part of the Great Arab Maghrib, to whose unity it works within the framework of common interests." Indeed, Tunisia has been a consistent champion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the countries of the Maghrib (see Glossary), and it is a founding member of the Maghrib Permanent Consultative Committee, established in Tunis in 1964. With the exception of its short-lived 1974 agreement with Libya, Tunisia has been wary of any kind of political union within the Maghrib. Tunisian policymakers believe the concept of political union is premature and that Maghribi economic relations should be emphasized first. As Prime Minister Nouira commented in October 1977, "we believe that the Arab Maghrib is an economic unit and that the principal economic integration of its parties is the fundamental basis for creating the wherewithal for union from the economic standpoint." Tunisian authorities have in mind the eventual formation of some kind of economic confederation among Maghribi countries not unlike Western Europe's European Economic Community (EEC, also known as the Common Market).

Libya

Despite Libya's traditional affinity with the Mashriq (see Glossary), Tunisia has always regarded its eastern neighbor as part of the Maghrib. Since 1973 the two countries' ambassadors have been called high commissioners, and their embassies have been called commissions. During the 1950s and 1960s relations between Tunisia and Libya generally were uneventful. During the 1970s, however, relations have been highlighted by unsuccessful attempts to form a political union and by a dispute over maritime territorial limits.



Source: Based on information from "Decree No. 75–535, 4 August 1975, Concerning the Organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne*, Tunis, August 8–12, 1975 (U.S. Department of Commerce, JPRS: 65376, No. 1416, September 23, 1975).

Figure 12. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Organization, 1975

During a December 1972 visit to Tunis, Colonel Muammar al Qadhaafi publicly proposed a Tunisian-Libyan merger. Bourguiba immediately rejected the idea as unrealistic and chided Qadhaafi for his youth and inexperience. Thus it was surprising that only thirteen months later, in January 1974, Bourguiba agreed to a new unity plan, for which then Foreign Minister Masmoudi was thought primarily responsible. Prime Minister Nouira, out of the country at the time, quickly returned home and apparently persuaded Bourguiba to retract his acceptance of the unity plan. Masmoudi was dismissed, the date of the Tunisian public referendum on the merger was postponed, and it was announced that Tunisia would hold consultations with other Maghribi countries prior to any union. The union plan soon became a moot issue; Bourguiba stated that he had agreed only to the concept of eventual Maghribi unification, not to any immediate specific union, and relations with Libya deteriorated.

In 1975 relations became further strained by Libya's opposition to Tunisia's policy on the Western Sahara. In March 1976 Libya began expelling several thousand Tunisian workers. Later in the same month Bourguiba announced the arrest of a three-man Libyan team sent to kill or kidnap high Tunisian officials. There was some disagreement about who the targets might be, but speculation included Nouira, then Foreign Minister Habib Chatti, and even Bourguiba himself. Qadhaafi denied any Libyan-inspired plot, but Tunisia recalled its high commissioner and ordered Libyan diplomatic personnel out of the country. Tunisia later alleged that Libya was providing military training for opponents of the Bourguiba regime.

Still another major issue contributing to strained relations was a long-time dispute over the location of the maritime border between Tunisia and Libya in the Gulf of Gabes. Continental shelf oil reserves were at the center of the dispute. The two countries agreed in August 1976 to seek arbitration by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, but with little result. Tunisia accused an Italian exploratory drilling rig under Libyan contract of operating in its territorial waters in February 1977. Operations were suspended, and the rig was eventually removed, only to be replaced in May by an American company vessel (flying the Panamanian flag) under Libyan contract. In June the secretary general of the League of Arab States (Arab League) and others helped mediate an agreement through which the two countries again would submit their maritime boundary dispute to the ICJ. Documents ratifying this agreement were exchanged in February 1978 but had not been formally presented to the ICJ as late as midsummer.

The June 1977 agreement to take the dispute to the ICJ led to improved relations and increased technical and economic cooperation. In August after a visit to Libya, Tunisian Agriculture Minister Hassan Belkhodja (not to be confused with former Interior

Minister Taher Belkhodja) commented that he believed Qadhaafi no longer required a political union as a precursor to close economic relations. The matter of unity had not been raised in their discussions. Only a few months later, however, in a June 1978 speech before the Algerian legislature, Qadhaafi proposed a new union involving Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia. Tunisian officials were unenthusiastic, believing political union premature and thus unrealistic.

Still another aspect in the relations of the two countries was Libya's interest in Tunisian domestic politics. During 1977, as tension between the UGTT and the Nouira government was increasing, the union federation's secretary general, Achour, visited Libya, claiming that he was attempting to establish closer working relations with Libyan unions and to contribute to improved bilateral relations between the two countries. On one of his trips to Libya, Achour met with Masmoudi before the former foreign minister had ended his self-imposed exile and returned to Tunisia. Relations between the Tunisian government and the labor federation became more strained in late December 1977 when a UGTT delegation visited Libya to organize a UGTT branch for Tunisian workers there. Despite the Tunisian government's long-established moderate policy on the issue, the UGTT delegation signed an agreement that included support for Libya's extremist policy calling for military victory to settle the Middle East dispute. Libya has given verbal support to both Achour and Masmoudi, and Masmoudi continues to maintain contacts in that country.

Algeria

Tunisia contributed significant material support to the Algerian war of independence against the French and permitted the provisional Algerian government and its armed forces to operate on Tunisian soil. Relations became strained during the 1961 Bizerte crisis when Tunisian and Algerian territorial claims overlapped in the Sahara (see Relations with France, ch. 1). Algeria was accused of involvement in the December 1962 plot to assassinate Bourguiba; diplomatic relations were severed but restored a few months later, in May, 1963, after Moroccan mediation. Despite the fact that both countries gave sanctuary to the opponents of each other's regimes during the 1960s, formal relations remained generally friendly and were especially positive in the realm of economic cooperation. A long-standing disagreement on their mutual border was resolved through a 1970 treaty, which also included a friendship pact. Important trade agreements were concluded two years later. Also in 1972, both countries agreed to a common Mediterranean policy, based on Bourguiba's desire to form an association of nonaligned, coastal states and to secure the withdrawal of foreign (non-Mediterranean) naval fleets from the Mediterranean Sea, thus converting that body of water into a "lake of peace."

Morocco

Tunisian-Moroccan relations have been closer than any other Maghribi bilateral combination. Both countries have a tradition of friendship with the West, similarly moderate views on the emotional issue of the Palestinian Arabs and Israel, and a distaste for the more radical political policies of their Maghribi neighbors. The most serious strain on their relationship occurred in 1960 when Tunisia supported the independence of Mauritania. Morocco claimed Mauritania at the time but publicly renounced that claim in 1969. Although not technically part of the Maghrib, Mauritania has historical and cultural ties to the area. Tunisia has encouraged Mauritanian involvement in Maghribi affairs and membership in the Maghrib Permanent Consultative Committee, which Mauritania joined in 1975.

Relations between Morocco and Tunisia improved in 1964 when their heads of state met at the Arab summit conference in January of that year. Ambassadors were exchanged during the summer. Tunisia supported the independence of the Western Sahara area from Spain but opposed a self-determination referendum because it feared Spanish interference and doubted the area's viability as an independent country. As early as 1974 Bourguiba recommended that the area be divided between Morocco and Mauritania. Such a partitioning occurred in 1976, and an indigenous independence movement subsequently proclaimed the creation of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). The SADR's guerrilla army continued fighting the military forces of Morocco and Mauritania into 1978. Bourguiba's support for the partition temporarily earned Tunisia the enmity of Libya and especially Algeria, which strongly favored Saharan self-determination. Tunisian involvement had become moot by 1977, however, its policy evolving into one of strict neutrality on the issue. Tunisia's relations with Morocco remained cordial into 1978.

Mashriq Relations

Tunisia has been suspicious of the pan-Arab movements of some of the Maghrib and Mashriq countries and emphasizes its own nationalism in place of supranational ideologies. Its policies toward the Mashriq countries have focused on two issues: the Arab-Israeli dispute—more particularly the plight of Palestinian Arabs—and the participation of Mashriq countries in Tunisian economic development plans. Tunisia has been a consistent advocate of the rights of Palestinian Arabs and frequently receives representatives of the PLO and its component groups, such as Al Fatah. In January 1977 PLO executive chairman Yasir Arafat thanked Bourguiba for Tunisia's help in influencing the French to release Abu Dawud, who was alleged to have helped plan the attack on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. An Al Fatah representative reportedly intervened with the government on behalf of Masmoudi before his return to Tunisia

in December 1977. A PLO executive bureau member, Abu Iyad, attempted to mediate between Nouira and Achour in early January 1978, not long before the Black Thursday confrontation.

Despite its cordial relationship with the PLO, Tunisia's position is moderate regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. During a tour of Middle East countries in 1965, Bourguiba apparently was strongly influenced by the treatment given the Palestinian refugees in the camps provided by other Arab countries. After a visit to one of the camps in Jericho, he publicly urged the refugees to give up their "chimerical hopes" of total victory and called on the Arab countries to negotiate a settlement with Israel. The other Arab states immediately condemned Bourguiba as a defeatist, and he was forced to cancel the remainder of his tour because of threats of public disorder and even assassination. Tunisia subsequently boycotted the September 1965 Casablanca Arab summit conference and Arab delegation meetings at the UN between 1965 and 1967.

Tunisia advocated acceptance of the 1947 UN Resolution 181, which sanctioned the partition of the area then called Palestine into independent Arab and Jewish states, as the basis for a negotiated settlement. Despite the initial Arab rejection, this basic concept became central to many of the peace plans that came under consideration after the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973. Bourguiba offered the case of Tunisia's struggle for independence from France, in which the gradual or step-by-step method was employed, as an example Palestinian Arabs should emulate in their conflict with the Israelis. He believed that the Arab countries could not win a conventional war with Israel because of its American support. In any event, to be successful the Palestinian Arabs themselves would have to bear the brunt of the struggle, with the assistance, not the dominance, of Arab countries.

The breach between Tunisia and the Arab countries of the Middle East was ended with the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967. Although not altering its basic policy view on the Palestinian issue, Tunisia organized an expeditionary military force. The force failed to see action because of the brief duration of the war, but the Tunisian gesture was appreciated by other Arab states. American, British, and Jewish property was destroyed in riots that occurred in Tunis when the war began, and many members of the already small Jewish community emigrated to France. The riots were denounced by Bourguiba, and a tax was later levied against all households in Tunis to pay for the damage. Bourguiba accepted UN Resolution 242 as a corollary to UN Resolution 181. The new resolution was adopted in the aftermath of the 1967 conflict and included the concept of guaranteed secure borders among combatant states as necessary to secure peace.

Tunisia contributed a small military contingent, medical teams, and other material assistance to the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973. At the same time Bourguiba sternly warned against any repetition of the violence that had been directed at the

Jewish population in Tunisia in 1967. As was the case in 1967, his commitment to an eventual negotiated settlement based on UN Resolution 181 was unchanged by the military conflict. The possibility of direct Tunisian-Israeli talks was raised after Bourguiba's 1965 Jericho speech and again before and after the 1973 conflict but apparently never reached fruition.

Despite the unity fostered by the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, the Palestinian issue has caused periodic strains in Tunisia's relations with Middle Eastern Arab countries. In July 1973 Bourguiba called on King Hussein to relinquish his throne and convert Jordan into a Palestinian Arab state. Jordan broke its diplomatic ties with Tunisia, but relations were restored later in the year. Ambassadors were exchanged in 1978. Attacks on PLO units in Lebanon by Syrian peacekeeping forces drew criticism from Bourguiba in 1976. Tunisia's relations with Syria had been broken between 1968 and 1971 after Syrian embassy staff members had been accused of subversive activities.

Tunisia was critical of Egypt's confrontation policy toward Israel during the late 1950s and 1960s and dismayed by Egypt's attempt to lead the Arab League into adoption of that policy. Tunisia was also critical of Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser's militant pan-Arabism, his friendly relations with the Soviet Union during the 1960s, and the attempts to form some kind of union between Egypt and Libya. Diplomatic ties were broken between 1958 and 1961 after Tunisia accused Egypt of controlling the Arab League. They were restored after the 1961 Bizerte crisis, broken again in 1965, partially restored a year later, and restored to the full ambassadorial level in July 1970. Relations have improved markedly during the regime of Anwar al Sadat, who became president following Nasser's death in 1970. In mid-1977 the two countries agreed to make visa requirements for each other's citizins applicable only to visits over three months in duration; to increase contacts between political parties, local and regional officials, and national organizations; and to exchange knowledge on local administration and governmental decentralization.

When Sadat traveled to Israel in November 1977 for direct talks with officials there, Tunisia criticized the unilateral action for damaging Arab solidarity. At the same time Tunisian officials cautioned that only Israel would profit if the disunity caused by the Sadat peace initiative were perpetuated by the actions of other Arab states. They also noted that the initiative had demonstrated Israeli intransigence in denying the right of Palestinian Arabs to their homeland and in the continued Israeli refusal to negotiate with the PLO. Although the Sadat peace initiative caused some surprise and strain, it did not appear to have damaged seriously the generally positive relations between Tunisia and Egypt. When Israel invaded southern Lebanon in March 1978, Tunisia denounced the attacks on PLO bases and civilian refugee camps and reaffirmed its support of the Palestinian Arab cause.

During the mid-1960s Tunisia began courting participation in its economic development plans by the Mashriq oil states, with which it shared an aversion to the policies of the more radical Arab countries. Loans and grants from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—particularly Abu Dhabi—and Saudi Arabia rapidly increased during the 1970s and formed a significant part of Tunisia's development capital (see Foreign Aid, ch. 3).

Western Europe

Tunisia has extensive historical, cultural, and economic ties with Western Europe. It also considers its security to be connected to that of Western Europe and especially to that region's southern countries, which, like Tunisia, are littoral Mediterranean states.

The country's closest European ties are with its former colonial power, France. Tunisia was caught initially in the dilemma of attempting to maintain positive relations with France while at the same time aiding Algeria in its war for independence against France. Tunisia broke relations in February 1958 when French aircraft attacked the Tunisian village of Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf while engaging Algerian forces (see Relations with France, ch. 1). Relations were resumed a few months later after mediation by the United Kingdom and the United States. After French President Charles de Gaulle's decision to allow Algerian self-determination, Tunisia was able to attempt mediation between the two parties. The 1961 Bizerte crisis caused Tunisia to break relations again with France, however. Relations were restored when France evacuated its Bizerte naval base in 1963. Ties were again strained in 1964 when Tunisia nationalized French-owned property and France reacted by canceling its foreign aid to Tunisia. Relations began to improve soon thereafter, however, and important economic agreements, including the resumption of French aid, were concluded in 1968 and 1969.

In 1972 Bourguiba enjoyed a personal triumph when he visited France for the first time in his official capacity as president of Tunisia. In 1975 French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing visited Tunisia and met with Bourguiba. Despite differences involving France's continuing claims for compensation stemming from the 1964 Tunisian nationalization incident and Tunisia's disappointment in its detrimental trade balance with France, agreement was reached on several economic and political issues. A joint communiqué at the end of Giscard d'Estaing's visit described relations as "exemplary." The positive relations continued in 1976 as Tunisia discontinued passport requirements for visiting French citizens and opposed a proposal calling for an oil embargo against France at the Colombo (Sri Lanka) summit meeting of nonaligned nations.

Tunisian relations with other West European countries in the mid- to late 1970s were generally good also. Political relations with Portugal, broken in 1963 because of that country's colonial poli-

cies, were restored in 1974 when the Portuguese recognized the independence of one of their former African colonies, Guinea-Bissau. Financial agreements, many of which included developmental loans to Tunisia, were in force with several countries (see Foreign Trade, ch. 3).

Tunisia experienced problems in its relations with Spain and Italy. An adverse trade balance was the main problem with Spain; difficulties with Italy were more complex. Between 1974 and 1977 relations with Italy included disputes over fishing rights, assaults on the Tunisian community in Sicily, and the level of Italian imports of Tunisian olive oil (complicated by Italy's membership in the EEC). An Italian exploratory oil rig was involved temporarily in the Tunisian-Libyan maritime border dispute in early 1977. A new argument over fishing rights erupted in May 1977, but in July Tunisia and the Italian state petroleum company concluded an agreement for the construction of a natural gas pipeline to link Algeria with Italy via Tunisia and Sicily.

United States

Tunisian-American relations date from the late 1700s and have remained consistently cordial since Tunisia achieved independence. The Tunisian trade union movement developed close ties with the American Federation of Labor in the 1950s. When the French discontinued foreign aid to Tunisia in 1964, the United States provided assistance. Between 1957 and 1976 American bilateral aid to Tunisia totaled US$850 million. Although no security treaties exist between the two countries, the United States has supplied Tunisia with considerable military aid and training (see Military Assistance, ch. 5).

Tunisia has never accepted the radical Third World view that the United States is an imperialist or neocolonialist country. It was nearly alone among nonaligned nations in not condemning the American war effort in Southeast Asia, a policy it eventually reversed after 1969. In November 1974, during the period of "shuttle diplomacy" that followed the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973, United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger conferred with President Bourguiba and other Tunisian officials to learn their views regarding the way a Middle East peace settlement might be achieved. The general Tunisian attitude has been that only with United States persuasion would Israel sincerely undertake the substantive negotiations necessary for such a settlement. Consequently, Tunisia has been disappointed with the degree of continuing American support for Israel, and Bourguiba has urged the United States to conduct direct talks with leaders of the Palestinian Arab resistance. American support for Israel notwithstanding, relations between Tunisia and the United States were very close in mid-1978.

Communist Countries

Tunisia's friendship with the West has not precluded positive relations with communist countries in Eastern Europe and Asia, although such relations have not been as long in duration or as close as have been ties with Western countries. Among East European states enjoying good relations with Tunisia in 1977 were Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia (which, like Tunisia, was a member of the Third World nonaligned movement). Numerous commercial and technical agreements were in force, and some of the East European countries were also providing Tunisia with significant numbers of medical personnel (see Health and welfare, ch. 2; see Foreign Aid, ch. 3).

Tunisia established relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) in August 1972. It also maintains diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and refuses to become involved in the Sino-Soviet dispute. In 1967 the PRC closed its embassy in Tunis, apparently irritated by Bourguiba's policies, which it considered to be favorable to "United States imperialists" and "Soviet revisionists." Formal relations were not broken at the time, and ties were later normalized. In 1975 the PRC agreed to send a contingent of doctors and nurses to Tunisia. In October 1977 a high-level PRC military delegation visited Tunisia; a Tunisian military delegation, led by Defense Minister Abdulla Farhat, returned the visit in May 1978.

Tunisian-Soviet relations were not established until 1960, after Tunisia had been disappointed by the lack of support it received from France's North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies during the Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf incident. The Soviet Union strongly backed Tunisia in the UN debates on the Bizerte crisis and supported the Tunisian demand for French evacuation of the military base there. Soviet economic and technical assistance to Tunisia has been substantial but has not approached that extended by the United States and other Western countries.

A serious incident in Tunisian-Soviet relations occurred in 1973 when two Soviet diplomats and a Soviet news agency correspondent were accused of espionage. Press reports indicated that Libya was also a target of the intelligence activities. The Soviet citizens were expelled; four Tunisian citizens involved in the affair were convicted of treason in May 1974, and four others were found innocent. Earlier, in January, Bourguiba announced that the Soviet Union had apologized for the incident. Other problems in Tunisian-Soviet relations have included differences over Israeli boundaries (Tunisia advocates boundaries based on the 1947 UN partition plan; the Soviet Union favors the Israeli boundaries that existed before the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967) and the refusal of the Soviet Union to curb Jewish immigration to Israel. Although relations were generally good in early 1978, Tunisia was becoming concerned over what it considered to be Soviet expansionism, as

evidenced by Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa dispute and its presence in several African countries.

Sub-Saharan African States

In 1965 President Bourguiba toured several African countries in a major effort to intensify Tunisian relations with countries south of the Sahara. He introduced the idea of forming a French-speaking economic community among African states, an idea that was received with varying degrees of enthusiasm and eventually was forgotten. More successful was his conclusion of bilateral trade and preferential tariff agreements with Liberia, Mali, Ivory Coast, Niger, and Senegal, as well as with Mauritania, in North Africa.

Tunisia has supported many of the African independence movements, including the Southwest African [Namibia] People's Organization—SWAPO; the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola—FNLA), which was defeated in a civil war by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola—MPLA) after Angola gained independence; the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique—FRELIMO); and the African Party for the Independence of Guinea [later Guinea-Bissau] and Cape Verde (Partido Africano da Independência de Guiné e Cabo Verde—PAIGC). An original member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Tunisia abided by that association's 1963 resolution calling for the severance of relations with Portugal because of its colonial policies. Relations were reestablished when Portugal decided to grant independence to its colonies after its 1974 revolution. Ethiopia broke diplomatic relations with Tunisia in 1975 when the Tunisians called for granting the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) observer status at the OAU ministerial council meeting in July of that year. The ELF opened an office in Tunis in 1976, and Tunisia maintained support for that organization in the Horn of Africa conflict that continued into 1978.

Tunisia has joined other Arab countries in encouraging African states to break diplomatic ties with Israel and has encouraged Arab states to break relations with the regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa. Tunisia supported the creation of the Arab Bank for Development in Africa and also has endorsed the proposal that the Arab states guarantee to meet the petroleum needs of all African countries except those with apartheid or colonial regimes.

In 1976 Bourguiba condemned the waste involved when Third World countries allocated their limited funds for arms rather than for economic development, especially in cases where the arms were used in conflicts with neighboring countries. A major concern of Bourguiba was the situation in Africa where he believed members of the nonaligned movement were becoming the objects of "great-power rivalry," much to their own detriment. Foreign power intrigue and intervention in Africa have perturbed Tunisian officials, particularly during the 1970s.

Important Multilateral Relations

United Nations

Tunisia joined the UN on November 12, 1956, and is a member of most of its specialized agencies. It has used the UN as a forum in publicizing national causes (such as the Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf and Bizerte incidents), the Palestinian Arab cause, anticolonialism, and opposition to apartheid. Responding to a UN appeal, Tunisia contributed military units to the Congo peacekeeping force in 1960. Tunisia advocates the partition plan envisioned in UN Resolution 181 (adopted in 1947) as the basis for a Palestinian Arab-Israeli settlement.

European Economic Community

Tunisia became an associate member of the EEC in 1969. Because of their long history of exploiting the natural resources and cheap labor in underdeveloped countries, Tunisia strongly feels that the Western industrialized countries, such as the EEC members, have a responsibility to assist in the development attempts of the poorer nations through guaranteed markets and prices for Third World products. Tunisia believes that if the gap between rich and poor nations continues to widen, future instability on a global basis will be the result. Tunisia has proposed that the EEC establish light, less technical industries in the Maghribi countries where available labor already exists. This would avoid the problems now incurred by the Maghribi countries through the large migrations of workers to EEC countries.

Relations with the EEC were strained in July 1977 when textile import restrictions were placed on goods from several countries, including Tunisia. The restrictions came at a time when Tunisia was already running a large deficit in its trade with EEC members. Tunisia received partial relief in December when it was granted the right to determine its own limits on some textile exports to the EEC. Only a few items were eligible for unrestricted export, however, and Tunisia continued to pursue more advantageous trade relations with the EEC in 1978 (see Foreign Trade, ch. 3).

League of Arab States

Tunisia did not join the League of Arab States (Arab League) until 1958. Between 1958 and 1961 it boycotted league meetings because of a dispute with Egypt. Tunisia generally has allied itself with the conservative Arab oil states, first against Nasser's dominance of the league and later against the radical policies of some of the organization's other members. On a number of occasions Tunisia has proposed that the Arab League establish a permanent committee of reconciliation to mediate inter-Arab disputes. Although generally well received, according to Tunisian officials, the idea had yet to be implemented in late 1977. Tunisia is also a member of several other Arab regional organizations, including the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Conference.

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The best general description in English of Tunisian political development from the colonial period to the mid-1970s is found in Wilfrid Knapp's *North West Africa: A Political and Economic Survey*. Believing that the political demise of Ben Salah in 1969 demonstrated the Destourian Socialist Party's failure to politically educate and mobilize the masses and to provide effective communication between the masses and their leaders, North African scholar Charles A. Micaud concluded that some early works on postindependence Tunisia lacked objectivity. In "Politics in North Africa: Tunisia," Micaud wrote of an early "built-in bias in favor of Tunisia as the most successful example . . . of effective political development" and acknowledged that he and others had contributed to "an exaggeratedly favorable image of the Tunisian political system." Although other observers might interpret the Ben Salah incident differently or be reluctant to engage in Micaud's scholarly self-criticism, there are, in fact, few thorough, objective studies on Tunisian politics. Most of the scholars who engaged in earlier research have not updated their work, nor have new researches chosen to focus attention on Tunisia in recent years. For this reason specialized newsletters and journals, such as *Maghreb-Machrek, Marchés Tropicaux et Méditerranéen*, and *Revue Française d'Etudes Politiques Africaines* (all in French) and *Africa Contemporary Record* and *Arab Report and Record* (both in English), are invaluable sources of information on various aspects of contemporary Tunisian politics.

Jeswald W. Salacuse provides an excellent account of Tunisian political institutions and constitutional development in *An Introduction to Law in French-Speaking Africa, II: North Africa*. Salacuse's constitutional data can be supplemented with more recent works, such as Gisbert H. Flanz' *Tunisia* and "La Révision de la Constitution Tunisienne" in *Maghreb-Machrek*, by Elie Cohen-Hadria.

The subjects of Bourguibism and Destourian socialism are included in John P. Entelis' "Reformist Ideology in the Arab World: The Cases of Tunisia and Lebanon" in the *Review of Politics;* Charles F. Gallagher's "Tunisia Modernizes" in *Africa Report;* and in several of Habib Bourguiba's speeches published by the Tunisian Secretariat of State for Information—see also excerpts from one of Bourguiba's speeches in "Destourian Socialism and National Unity" in *Man, State, and Society in the Contemporary Maghrib*, edited by I. William Zartman.

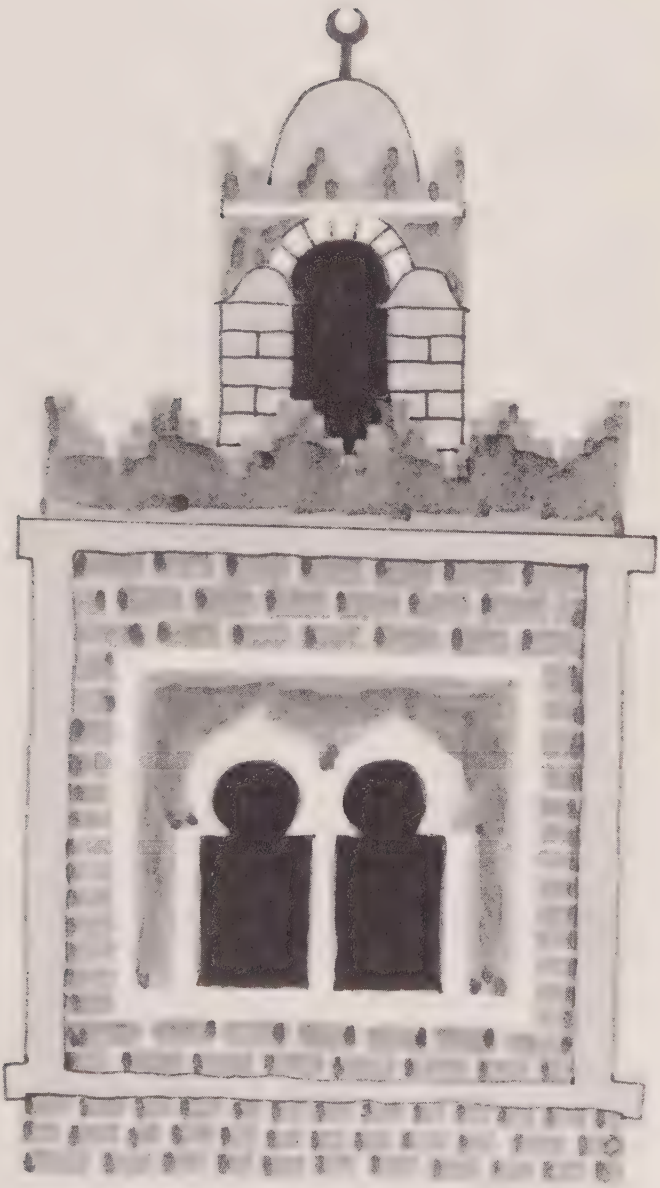
Lars Rudebeck's *Party and People: A Study of Political Change in Tunisia* is the most complete work in English on the PSD. Mohsen Toumi provides more recent information on the same subject in "Le Parti Socialiste Destourien" and "Le Parti Socialiste Destourien (III)," both published in *Revue Française d'Etudes Politiques Africaines*.

Two articles that provide insight concerning the social and

political unrest that developed in the mid-1970s are Lorna Hahn's "Tunisian Political Reform: Procrastination and Progress" (which traces the problem of presidential succession to 1972) in the *Middle East Journal* and Entelis' *Ideological Change and an Emerging Counter-Culture in Tunisian Politics: An Attitudinal Survey of University Students*, which was one of the first studies to indicate the existence of serious student dissatisfaction with the polical system.

A brief but informative account of the political opposition is found in Stuart H. Schaar's "Le jeu des forces politiques en Tunisie" in *Maghreb-Machrek*. Jean-Pierrre Langellier describes the January 1978 labor-government confrontation in "Black Thursday in Tunisia" in the *Le Monde* English section of the *Guardian*. S. E. Waltz provides an excellent analysis of the events leading to the Black Thursday incident and of the general political situation in early 1978 in "Ferment in Tunisia" in *Africa News*. (For further information see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. National Security



Adaptation of architectural elements from the Ribat of al Munastir

TUNISIA, SINCE INDEPENDENCE in 1956, has assumed a paradoxical stance among the other modern states of North Africa, particularly in terms of national security interests. Its location on the southern coast of the Mediterranean and its naval base at Bizerte—the natural harbor is deep enough to permit undetected use by submerged submarines—remain as strategically significant as they were during World War II when they served as key elements in the control of the narrow waters between North Africa and Sicily. Potential use of such facilities—or their denial to unfriendly powers—long has been a feature of strategic considerations by both the Western allies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Soviet Union.

The young republic is flanked on either side by Algeria and Libya, radical Arab states whose governments came to power through rebellious military action and in which a revolutionary ethos has persisted. The military strengths of both neighbors have grown steadily over the years with Soviet assistance. Despite periodic tensions that on occasion have raised the possibility of armed clashes with the two more powerful countries, Tunisia has carefully foregone participation in a North African arms race. Without the economic resources available to Algeria and Libya to fund a sophisticated military force, the pragmatic Tunisian government has chosen instead to adopt a more practical way to achieve national security.

Lacking any hope of absolute defense, the government under the leadership of President Habib Bourguiba and Prime Minister Hedi Nouira has been content to maintain a military establishment of comparatively modest size and limited combat effectiveness, depending to a large degree on the international community for assistance in any emergency involving an external threat. The defense force consists of a predominant army, a small navy, and an even smaller air force; it is designated the Tunisian National Army (TNA), a collective title that refers to the entire establishment. The TNA and a large paramilitary police system are key elements in a defense strategy that features the ability to provide credible deterrence against external threats of aggression and, if that fails, to deal effectively with minor incursions until assistance can be expected from friendly states or ultimately the United Nations (UN).

The value of such a strategy, however, is not keyed solely to the possibility of external threats. Aside from Morocco, Tunisia in 1978 was the only North African country with an unblemished record of governments coming to power through political rather than military action. Entering sovereignty with a clearly dominant political party under the pervasive control of civilians who had fought hard to eliminate all domestic sources of opposition, the

politicians were relieved of the need to contend with a victorious national liberation army. While a military establishment admittedly was needed to assure internal security, its apolitical reliability was required but was not taken for granted. In the twenty years since the TNA's establishment, therefore, the political elite have been careful to keep the military's size and potential for domestic influence perennially insufficient to threaten the continued primacy of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD), the government, and Bourguibism.

Tunisian Military Tradition

Contemporary Tunisian society reflects little of the military tradition that permeates the national life of the other Maghribi countries. This is somewhat unusual inasmuch as the original indigenous people of most of North Africa are Berbers who, as early historical events testify, possessed decided martial inclination and prowess, particularly when called upon to assert or defend their independence (see Early History, ch. 1).

Scholarly observers, such as political scientist Jacob C. Hurewitz of Columbia University, have attributed this Maghribi anomaly partly to legacies of the era before Tunisia's protectorate period and to experiences encountered during the seventy-five years of French domination. More important, according to Hurewitz, have been the changes that have occurred within the societal structure, including the virtual disappearance of traditional Berber culture (see Social Structure and Values, ch. 2). The modernization process instituted in independent Tunisia by Bourguiba and his authoritarian one-party rule thus has not had to depend on the usual leverage of a preeminent military establishment to settle internal disputes between contending ethnic groups as have other developing countries. Neither has it required military help in unifying the largely homogeneous population behind the goals and aspirations that Bourguiba and his political elite have upheld as national objectives. Even so, the national life of the country has not been entirely devoid of military experience.

Under French control Tunisia was a source of additional military manpower and provided France with a naval base at Bizerte, a move that placed French naval power strategically in the central Mediterranean. After establishing the protectorate, the French began to augment their own forces with Tunisians. Under a beylical decree in 1883 the French administration was granted the authority to recruit local Muslims for the purpose of forming mixed French-Muslim military units. By 1893 all Muslim males in Tunisia had become subject to military duty, but the numbers actually pressed into service were far smaller than this liability would imply. Inductions varied from region to region, and it was possible for Muslims chosen for service to provide substitutes as long as induction quotas were fulfilled. Muslim Tunisians recruited in this manner were required to serve for three years, as were French settlers who were subject to the conscription laws of

metropolitan France. The system—at least as it applied to Muslims—resulted in lowered manpower standards. Most of the recruits came from the poorer classes of Tunisian society, and illiteracy was a common trait.

To assist in the pacification effort throughout the Maghrib, the French—as they had done in Algeria—formed Muslim infantry regiments of *tirailleurs* (riflemen) and spahis (cavalry) in Tunisia. In the late nineteenth century some of these units joined with their Algerian counterparts in aiding the French in military conquests south of the Sahara. Tunisian Muslim soldiers also formed regiments in the French Foreign Legion and served in southern Tunisia as *méharistes* (camel corpsmen). Although Muslims served in all branches of the French army, a certain amount of segregation persisted. Few Tunisian soldiers—unless they were naturalized French citizens—were able to become officers, and of those only a small number rose beyond the rank of captain. In mixed units Muslim officers were not permitted command authority, and none were given high-level staff positions anywhere in the French military organization. The infantry and cavalry units were homogeneous organizations: Muslim soldiers under the command of French officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). These units compared with the Zouaves, infantry brigades made up of Frenchmen born in North Africa, and separate French cavalry brigades known as Chasseurs d'Afrique. More heterogeneity existed in artillery units, where Muslim soldiers were assigned as drivers and the French served as gunners. Most of the transportation corps consisted of Muslims under French command.

Although recruited chiefly for military service in Africa, Tunisian members of the French army were liable for service abroad and served with courage and distinction in such divergent spots as France and Indochina. It has been estimated that of the approximately 75,000 Tunisians who served France during World War I, some 50,000 experienced combat in the trenches on the European western front, where their casualty rate was extremely high. Before France collapsed under the onslaught of Hitler's troops in World War II, many Tunisian soldiers and their counterparts from Algeria and Morocco were sent to Europe to aid the French in their fight against the Germans. As part of Hitler's June 1940 armistice agreement that accompanied German occupation, French was permitted to retain a maximum of 120,000 troops in North Africa, including 15,000 in Tunisia of which roughly 10,500 were Muslims. An inadequate supply of weapons—most of which were obsolete—reduced the effectiveness of this modest military capability as the war progressed, and the Axis powers managed to prevent its resupply by the Allies. After Allied successes in the fight to liberate North Africa in 1943, Tunisian and other North African soldiers saw action in the Italian campaign and the eventual liberation of France.

After World War II the rise of Tunisian nationalism, which encouraged acts of dissidence and anti-French activity in the form of sporadic guerrilla warfare, heralded the quest for independence (see French Protectorate, ch. 1). From early 1952 Tunisian guerrilla bands enjoyed considerable popular support and conducted operations primarily in the areas south of Tunis. These operations—guerrilla actions in the classical sense—consisted of acts of sabotage and coercion against the French community as well as against Tunisians who sympathized with the French authorities. The Tunisian Muslims involved in these demonstrations of militancy were classified as terrorists and labeled *fellaghas* (rebels) by the French press. The *fellaghas* were essentially survivors of an intense counterinsurgency campaign waged against Tunisian militants by the Foreign Legion. They subsequently sought refuge in the central and southern mountains, buying time and increasing their strength and support from Muslims who resented French administrative policies and practices. Although the *fellaghas* were able to commit isolated incidents, they were never able to muster a unified and cohesive force. It has been estimated that their strength never exceeded 3,000 men. By early 1956 most of their bands were deactivated as an act of cooperation aimed at enhancing the prospects of independence.

The Armed Forces

Tunisia approached independence during an era after World War II when the prevailing ethos in North Africa and the Middle East demanded that national sovereignty be symbolized by the acquisition of a modern military establishment. Although Bourguiba and his predominant Neo-Destour Party colleagues were wary of possible opposition from a potentially ambitious army, they pragmatically concluded that attainment of a domestic defense force was necessary if French interdependence were to be avoided. Moreover, without some semblance of an ability to defend itself in restive North Africa, the new state would likely invite serious trouble. In any event the military would not be required to defend the country against external aggression; such dangers would instead be obviated by the adept efforts of the government's diplomatic corps. Thus the army could play an important role in matters of internal security.

General Development Trends

At independence in 1956 the first order of business for the new government was the restoration of public order and the curbing of threats of anarchy generated by economic malaise and nationalist militants sympathetic to the Tunisian leftist Salah Ben Youssef. Inflexible in his advocacy of guerrilla warfare as the only way to independence, Ben Youssef felt that his views were borne out by the events in neighboring Algeria and his own experiences in Egypt as a member of the Maghribi Liberation Committee. His affinity for political terrorism was partly supported by Egypt's

radical president, Gamal Abdul Nasser, a fact that had not escaped the attention of the Neo-Destour Party hierarchy—particularly Ben Youssef's chief rival, Habib Bourguiba.

In April 1956 the French transferred responsibility for internal security to the new Tunisian government, including indigenous elements of the police services that had operated under French control during the protectorate era. The new Tunisian government used them to track down Youssefists. Some of the principal agitators of this terrorist group were arrested, tried, and sentenced as an example of the government's intention to ensure a climate of acceptable public order for its development goals. Despite these efforts, however, the Youssefist threat was eliminated only with the force of large-scale operations by the French army three months after Tunisian independence.

In the matter of responsibility for defense—and the building of a national military establishment—the transfer of authority was less clearly defined. France was committed to a growing counterguerrilla war in Algeria and regarded its continued military presence in neighboring Tunisia as an essential ingredient in its successful management of the Algerian crisis. Moreover, the French viewed Tunisia, under the pro-Western leadership of Bourguiba and his Neo-Destour Party, as an ideal ally in their desire for continued dominance of North Africa. According to the French, this would be achieved by keeping Tunisia heavily dependent on them for economic and military assistance.

The war in Algeria, however, had a different impact on the government of sovereign Tunisia, which owed much of its success in bringing about the termination of the French protectorate era to the Algerian crisis. Moreover, the Algerian war of independence was a cause with which many Tunisian nationalists sympathized. As a newly independent state, Tunisia could hardly afford to be drawn into assisting the French in opposing its neighbor's Army of National Liberation (Armée de Libération Nationale—ALN). Instead, the growing rebellion against French domination brought increased Tunisian support for the Algerian cause. Tunisian territory was a haven where ALN forces trained and where their general staff planned and operated for a time. Tunisia also served as a conduit for arms deliveries to the ALN, a fact that was well known to the French.

To stem these activities France sought to maintain its military presence in independent Tunisia, espousing the notion that both countries would share in the new state's external defense needs. This form of interdependence, however, drew a less than sympathetic response from Bourguiba and his Neo-Destour Party hierarchy. In his quest for a strong monolithic political structure, Bourguiba had fought hard to achieve complete sovereignty. Negotiations toward this goal proceeded, and in June 1956 the French government, beset with greater concerns for the Algerian conflict, agreed to assist Tunisia in the formation of its own military arm.

The nucleus of the new military force—the TNA—consisted of roughly 1,300 Muslim Tunisian soldiers, who were released from the French army, and some 600 ceremonial troops of the beylical guard, which the French had permitted the Tunisian bey to retain as a personal bodyguard throughout the protectorate era. These sources of military personnel were supplemented by volunteers—loyal party youth and politically reliable *fellaghas* of the earlier resistance movement. Key officer and NCO positions were filled by personnel carefully selected by the leadership of the Neo-Destour Party. Many of them had received training at Saint Cyr, the French military academy, or had served as NCOs in French military units. All were loyal Neo-Destours.

By the end of 1956 the TNA consisted of roughly 3,000 officers and men organized in a single regiment. Initial plans called for its expansion to the strength of one light division, but this goal was obstructed by a shortage of qualified officers. Resolution of this problem was aided through a negotiated agreement with the French, who provided spaces for 110 Tunisian officer candidates to train at Saint Cyr. Meanwhile a school for NCOs was established at Tunis with French help, and 200 enlisted men were enrolled to build up the needed cadre for the NCO corps. In addition to training Tunisian personnel, France provided a modest amount of military equipment and established a small liaison unit of French army officers, who were attached to the Secretariat of State for Defense in Tunis to advise and assist in matters of command and staff procedures.

As prime minister of Tunisia at independence, Bourguiba, the son of a former lieutenant of the beylical guard, assumed personal responsibility for the country's defense policies and posture. Upon becoming president of the republic in 1957, he also assumed the role of commander in chief of the armed forces as specified in the Constitution. Through the Secretariat of State for Defense, he administered the TNA with the assistance of a general staff. Article 45 of the Constitution provided him the authority to make military appointments, a valuable prerogative that permitted close presidential control of the military establishment and its personnel. Officers who had trained or served in the Arab East were eliminated by Bourguiba to obviate potential sympathy within the military establishment for the radical policies and practices of Egypt's Colonel Nasser.

Despite the assistance provided the new republic, independence did not remove frictions with the French. The war in neighboring Algeria and the continued occupation of bases in Tunisia by French forces—a concession of the independence agreement—served as unsettling factors for Tunisians. When the Bourguiba government pressed for the removal of its troops in mid-1957, France reacted with threats to terminate military assistance to the TNA. The French response left the Tunisian government in a quandary. The Algerian war had already demonstrated the inade-

quacy of the TNA as a viable defense force, and Bourguiba sought to strengthen its personnel complement and to provide it with adequate amounts of equipment, mainly small arms. Chief among his concerns was the establishment of a border patrol capability that would deter Algerian rebels sympathetic to the Youssefists from infiltrating Tunisia. The French, however, regarded Bourguiba's plea for weaponry as an attempt to procure guns and ammunition for the ALN.

The Tunisian government therefore set about establishing an organization known as the Garde Nationale, using domestic resources (see The Police System, this ch.). To man the Garde, former *fellaghas* were recruited, and the new paramilitary service began its operations with a personnel strength of roughly 3,000 officers and men. Its units suffered from shortages of small arms and other necessary military equipment, but its existence as a stopgap measure doubled the size of Tunisia's available security forces.

French intransigence in the matter of Tunisia's repeated requests for more arms led Bourguiba to turn to the United States, which had earlier concluded a bilateral agreement to supply the young republic with economic and technical assistance. Initial American reaction to the arms request was to defer the matter to its NATO ally, France. Negotiations failed to persuade the shaky French government—already beleaguered by pressures of the Algerian war—and the United Kingdom was asked to join in the response to Bourguiba's request. After drawn-out negotiations, the collapse of the French government, and no response from the succeeding French coalition under Félix Gaillard, the United States Department of State and the British Foreign Ministry announced in November 1957 their intention to airlift arms and supplies to the Bourguiba government. The shipments—500 American rifles and 50,000 rounds of ammunition, 350 British submachine guns, seventy Bren guns, and ammunition—were scheduled to arrive before Tunisia could be supplied by Egypt.

After settlement of the issue over arms aid, Bourguiba turned again to the matter of continued presence of French forces in Tunisia. Regarded as a hindrance to Tunisian claims of territorial integrity, French army troops were asked to evacuate their bases earlier than had been agreed in the preindependence protocol. Tunisian public support was generated for what Bourguiba termed the "battle for evacuation," and military skirmishes between French and Tunisian forces occurred sporadically. The most serious of these encounters came in 1961 after the French had consolidated their forces on the major military installation at Bizerte. Refusal to evacuate from Bizerte led to an attack on the French base by Neo-Destour militants, students, and volunteers from the trade unions, youth organizations, and women's unions. Organized and directed by the Garde Nationale, the Bizerte confrontation was an ill-conceived and militarily inappropriate adventure

against professional French troops that resulted in the loss of more than 1,000 Tunisian lives—largely those of civilians (see Relations with France, ch. 1). Few TNA regulars were involved—four battalions of 3,200 men had responded earlier to the UN appeal for a peacekeeping force in the Congo crisis of 1960. Nonetheless the tragic defeat at the hands of the French was regarded by the Tunisian military establishment as a painful humiliation.

With a deterioration of the economic situation and a rise in unemployment, evidences of public discontent prompted the Bourguiba government to strengthen its armed forces, which in 1960 numbered approximately 8,000 officers and men—including a small cadre assigned to the navy that had been created with French help in 1959. To achieve needed military manpower, the government relied on a system of selective conscription it had introduced in 1959. Under the conscription law a small stable cadre of politically reliable officers, NCOs, and lower enlisted ranks who had volunteered for career employment were strengthened by annual quotas of draftees. Conscripts were inducted at age twenty in equal increments every four months for a one-year period of active duty. The first four months of service involved basic military training followed by eight months of duty—largely on civic action projects—with regular troop units. Discharge from active service entailed further commitments to reserve pools.

In theory the system was designed to provide a ready source of trained personnel, but in practice it did little to enhance the capability of the TNA. Exemptions that were allowed potential draftees were extremely liberal, and consequently a preponderant number of illiterate young men were inducted for training and service. Moreover, most of the conscripts were separated from the TNA just when their training had turned them into useful members of service units.

Stimulated largely by tensions throughout North Africa and the Middle East, the government in the mid-1960s took further steps to amend Tunisia's military stance. Liberal Secretary of State for Defense Ahmed Mestiri, who had assumed responsibility for the TNA in 1966, proposed a long-term plan that included military modernization and involvement of the civilian population in the country's defense. Having been greatly impressed by the Israelis' ability to defeat the Arab forces in the brief war of June 1967, Mestiri saw in Israel's defense strategy a probable application for Tunisia as well. In a press conference he pointed out that, as the Israeli-Arab confrontation had demonstrated, military strength did not depend on quantity of armaments alone. More important, he felt, were the qualities of technical ability—particularly of the officer corps—ingrained organizational structure of units, and the kind of faith that animates soldiers. He was greatly impressed by the concept of the Israeli citizen-soldier and advocated adjustments that would involve both the military and the civilian population in a Tunisian program of total defense. The concept pro-

posed by Mestiri seemed more economically feasible than joining a North African arms race, and the government approved it. An initial change in military policy involved amending the conscription law to rectify some of its previous shortcomings and to upgrade the quality of trained reserves (see Quality and Sources of Manpower, this ch.). Modernization of the TNA, particularly in terms of new equipment and training, introduced into Tunisian defense strategy the factor of rising military costs and a continuing need for foreign military assistance.

Despite the government's seeming aversion to potential problems that might arise from a strong military establishment, domestic and regional pressures have obliged Bourguiba and his regime to make improvements in the TNA's capabilities as a credible security force. A major factor in these moves has been the persistence of unsettled relations with the country's eastern neighbor, Libya (see Foreign Relations, ch. 4).

Under pressures generated by a Libyan regime smarting from the earlier failure of a proposed political merger of the two countries, the Tunisian government stepped up its program of military modernization started nearly a decade earlier by Mestiri. In a speech to the National Assembly on December 21, 1976, after the legislature's approval of the government's 1977 budget, which included an increased amount for defense, Defense Minister Abdulla Farhat talked about government plans to organize a program of "comprehensive people's defense." According to Farhat, the republic's defense policy depended on two factors: a favorable external climate guaranteed by the leaders of friendly countries throughout the world and creation of a domestic climate that would make Tunisians feel they had something to defend. He said further that strengthening of the TNA was not only a question of quantity but also one of establishing cadres qualified in the use of modern technologies. "We have been able to provide these technologies and train the cadres to use them," he said, "thanks to our relations and friendships. We are experiencing no difficulty in this connection at our schools or at schools abroad. We only need time to acquire the right training."

Farhat explained that Tunisian defense policy did not rely solely on the TNA. "Victory in this age comes through one of two elements," he pointed out, "the atomic weapon or comprehensive people's defense. Since we have no expansionist aims or nuclear ambitions, the only thing left for us is the second alternative." Complete details of the program were not revealed publicly by the minister of defense, but the deterrent aspect of the move was underlined by his call for the organization of a reserve army that would be ready, in cooperation with the regular army, "to ward off danger." The program was to begin in 1977.

Throughout the two years after Farhat's speech to the National Assembly, the government has continued to modernize the TNA's fighting capabilities with assistance from France, the United

States, and other friendly Western nations (see Military Assistance, this ch.). But the scale of these efforts has been maintained at limits dictated by economic restraints and the government's continuing political wariness.

The Armed Forces in National Life

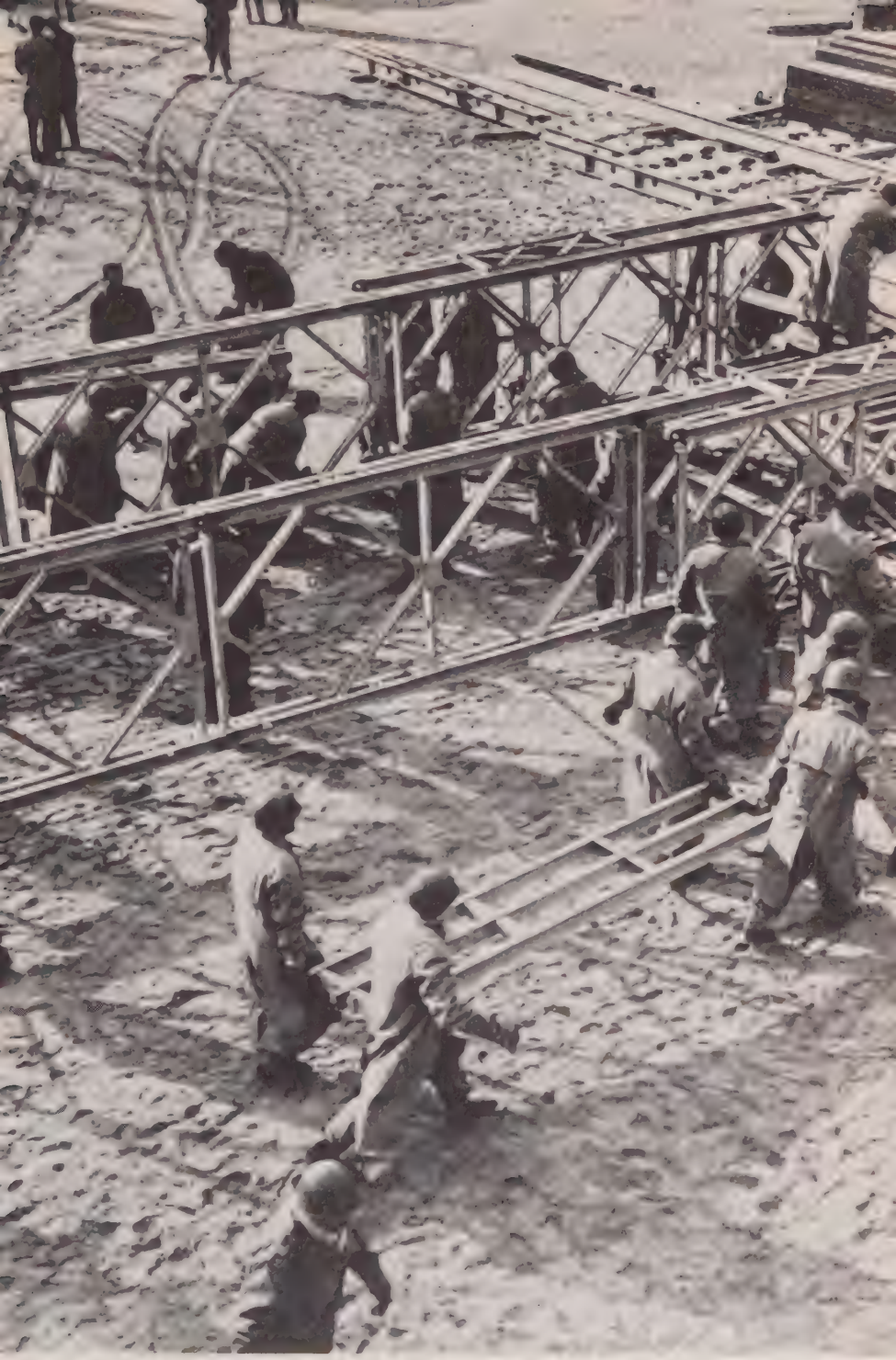
The TNA has a threefold mission: to defend the country's territorial integrity, to assist the police as necessary in maintaining internal security, and to participate actively in civic action programs associated with national development plans. Since their inception at independence the armed forces—by government design—have had little influence on political policy and a small role, if any, in national political activities. The government, particularly President Bourguiba, has consistently depicted the TNA as an "army of the people and for the people." It is commended to the public as a "perfect illustration of the inexistence of class consciousness, of the cherished principle that all citizens are equal and that none are favored at the expense of the other."

Government publications frequently point out that rather than being a praetorian guard, the TNA shares in the process of national economic development by "ensuring the social, moral, and professional advancement of its soldiers and, consequently, Tunisian citizens." At the same time citizens are reminded that, as Article 15 of the Constitution specifies, defense of the country and its safety is the sacred duty of every individual, not just those in military uniform. This concept serves as the basis for the country's conscription law and assures the people that the army merely provides the nation with an ideal framework for the fulfillment of one's duty.

In earlier years the Tunisian public traditionally reflected a fairly low level of esteem for anyone volunteering for a military career. Widespread efforts to achieve exemptions from conscription quotas served to underline this fact. Whether this attitude persisted in contemporary times could not be determined in the official general silence on matters of military affairs in 1978. The government's continued actions in stressing a "comprehensive people's defense" program and the increased exposure of large numbers of Tunisians to service with TNA units may have modified this somewhat adverse public attitude. A periodical published by the Ministry of Defense, *Al Jaish* (The Army), served as an official source of information designed to improve the morale of servicemen and to achieve favorable public reaction to the TNA's role in national defense matters.

Quality and Sources of Manpower

Throughout its brief history as a sovereign state Tunisia has had an ample number of men for its military needs. In the late 1970s nearly 44 percent of the population was under the age of fifteen, and there were more than 1.5 million males aged fifteen to forty-



Army engineers restoring communications after a major flood
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

nine. Of these, an estimated 850,000 were considered to be fit for military service. Each year roughly 59,000 reached the military age of twenty, indicating that basic manpower resources were more than adequate. Even with the addition of personnel needs for the paramilitary police units, manning of the TNA did not constitute a drain on the labor force. On the contrary, any significant reduction in conscription requirements would only exacerbate the perennially high unemployment rate in the civilian sector (see Employment, ch. 2).

Until 1959 the TNA depended solely on the recruitment of volunteers for its manpower needs. Even after compulsory military service was instituted, it was compulsory only in theory and required a reliable level of voluntary reenlistments of regulars to maintain necessary cadres for organizational viability. Changes in the selective service law in 1967 eliminated some of the former abuses of the system, but even in 1978 regulars who enlisted for periods of five years of active duty were still the reliable mainstay of the three TNA elements.

All physically able male citizens reaching the age of twenty are required to serve in the armed forces. Active military service normally extends for one year without interruption; but students, teachers, civil servants, and certain technicians can be authorized to fulfill their obligations in stages, if continuous service would interfere with their studies or occupations. A one-year deferment can be requested in peacetime by students and by those who have brothers currently serving in the TNA. Through the years the number of physically qualified men generally has exceeded the number of troops the government has found necessary to train and equip. As a result some young men have not served the year of active duty required of them by law.

The conscription procedure begins at age nineteen, when every male citizens must register with local authorities. Recruiting boards in each governorate consisting of the governor or his representative, an officer of the TNA, one or more physicians, and a clerk are responsible for reviewing the registrant's file and giving him a physical examination. At the time of induction a national board tours the governorates to decide who will be conscripted at once and who will be deferred or exempted under directives of the Ministry of Defense. Besides the physically unfit, exemptions can be given, except in a national emergency, to those who have already lost close relatives in the service of the country. Those who are the sole support of others can also be exempted.

After completing active military service, enlisted men and officers are required to become members of the reserves, for periods of nine years in the first reserve and fifteen years in the second reserve. During this time they are subject to recall for training or active duty in an emergency. Junior and senior officers of the reserves are also required to attend schools periodically to keep abreast of new techniques and mobilization procedures.

In 1978 little information was publicly available regarding the operation of the reserve system, the organization of reserve units, or the total size of reserve forces. Informed observers appeared confident that large numbers of reservists had received some military training, and many were under commitment for emergency recall; original plans had called for annual quotas of 9,000 to be inducted for one year of service. The use of large numbers of conscripts to supplement regular cadres in all three service elements has presented obstacles in estimating the size of the military forces on active duty at any given time (see Military Structure and Training, this ch.).

Tunisian conscription laws were written essentially for male citizens of the republic; but in light of the inroads made for the emancipation of women in other areas of the society, the possibility of military service for women has received periodic attention. For some years women with clerical and nursing skills have been employed in certain military organizations. In 1973 Defense Minister Farhat disclosed that the government was considering the possible extension of compulsory military service requirements to young women as well as to young men. With his announcement in December 1976 of plans to increase substantially the modernization of the TNA, Farhat revealed that women would be permitted to serve in the armed forces from 1977 onward. On March 17, 1977, an article in the Tunisian daily *La Presse* reported that 140 girls of secondary-school age had been recruited for service in the TNA. After a six-month course of training at a military school near Bizerte, the graduates would be assigned for duty at various TNA installations. According to the news report, full military training for women would be put into practice after 1977's model start as part of the "comprehensive people's defense" program.

Defense Costs

Throughout its history as an independent nation, Tunisia has maintained a record of being probably the lowest defense spender among all countries of the Arab world. Investment in impressive weaponry and awesome military strength have never been a facet of modern Tunisian life nor, until the mid-1970s, an apparent concern of the governing regime. Since achieving sovereignty the country has never devoted as much as 2 percent of its estimated gross national product (GNP) to defense expenditures, and the military share of the total government budget during the period has been consistently less than 7 percent (see table 14, Appendix). By comparison, from three to five times as much money has been budgeted and expended on education, and funds for public health programs have also generally exceeded the amounts authorized for military purposes.

This pattern indicates that the government has not unduly favored defense interests over other sectors but has made determined efforts to avoid runaway military commitments. As late as

March 1976 President Bourguiba continued to condemn publicly the practice of some Third World countries that spent vast amounts of money on arms rather than allocating the funds to national development. For some observers, this reflected an oblique reference to the growing military strength of Libya and underlined the degree of apprehension this revolutionary eastern neighbor's activities had fostered.

Although costs of modernizing the TNA were apparent to some degree in the national budgets beginning in 1976, they have still represented a relatively low-cost program, even by Tunisian standards. In traditional pragmatic Bourguiba style, a large part of these costs have been borne by friendly Western countries, whose concern for the growing strength of Soviet military clients in the region vis-à-vis a strategically placed ally has materially aided Tunisia in its effort to overcome two decades of military lethargy.

Military Structure and Training

Composed of heterogeneous elements of regular cadre and conscripts, the TNA in 1978 had an active-duty personnel strength estimated at roughly 22,200 officers and enlisted personnel. Of this total, 9,200 were regulars in career assignments; the remaining 13,000 were draftees serving for short periods of time to fulfill their compulsory military obligations. Included in the TNA were an army of approximately 18,000 (6,000 regulars, 12,000 conscripts), a navy of 2,500 (2,000 regulars, 500 conscripts), and an air force of 1,700 (1,200 regulars, 500 conscripts).

In general the TNA's organizational forms, logistical system, and administrative procedures for the first decade after independence were quite similar to the French pattern with which the Tunisian general staff was most familiar. Moreover, the presence of French advisers within the headquarters staff element ensured the continuance of these procedures. In time, as a result of senior TNA officers' exposure to the military techniques and practices of the United States and other Western countries during training abroad, the armed forces have developed their own hybrid support systems. Nonetheless the military structure in 1978 reflected the effects of predominant French, American, and other Western influence. This was particularly true with respect to the variety of arms and other equipment of all three service components—a situation that posed logistical problems relating to the need for adequate spare parts inventories to accommodate equipment maintenance and repair (see table 15, table 16, table 17, Appendix).

Responsible to the Ministry of Defense, the TNA operates according to command and staff policies developed by a general staff at the top of the military hierarchy and passed for implementation to the commanders of the army, navy, and air force components. When the TNA was first formed after independence, the general staff and senior commanders were carefully selected for their party loyalty and willingness to accept civilian control of the

armed forces. Organizational policies and operational concepts reflected the colonial legacy of wary concern for the reliability of ordinary soldiers at field unit levels. Moreover, senior officers of the general staff were representatives of the society's economically dominant groups. For many years they carefully screened all officers who were considered for positions of authority in troop units to ensure that antiregime elements did not pose potential threats.

This pattern has been partially modified but has continued to the degree that throughout the 1970s the officer corps has remained less than homogeneous. On the one hand there is the relatively small group of senior officers who have been elevated to key military positions essentially because of their political reliability. In the process of modernization of the armed forces, this senior element of the corps appears to have benefited most from the extensive training concepts provided by foreign sources. On the other hand the country's compulsory military conscription program has resulted in a growing influx of younger officers from working-class backgrounds. According to some observers, many of the younger group have edged away from the principles and practices espoused by the PSD, largely because of their earlier civilian experience. Government attempts to combat indications of potential sources of trouble have included improvements in the conditions of service, such as pay, food, and housing, but their effects remain questionable.

With more and more young Tunisians donning uniforms after conscription, military promotions in the lower grades have been slow, given the modest nature of national military budgets. As a result a closer relationship appears to have developed between the younger officers and the NCOs, a situation that is believed to have fostered growing populism within some TNA units. Potential unrest has also been reported from time by time by the international media regarding the dissatisfaction with which the young officers and enlisted conscripts view their roles as enforcers of the government's internal security requirements. Many are reported to disagree with the PSD's classification of militant social action by Tunisian citizens as domestic subversion. The future effects of these changes in philosophy were not predictable, but in 1978 there were at least indications that portions of the TNA were growing more and more independent of PSD controls.

To deal with internal security problems and potential external threats, the government relies on the collective advice of a body known as the National Defense Council. Formed in 1970, the council, which is chaired by the prime minister, is composed of the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, the interior, and finance and the minister delegate for planning. According to the decree by which it was formed, the council is consulted on the "application of the policy defined by the President of the Republic on national defense and on questions concerning State security."

Long-term absence of quality training programs for military personnel has been a major deterring factor in the development of the TNA as a credible fighting force. A shortage of technically trained officers and enlisted specialists has also been a significant and continuing problem. This, in addition to official reluctance to increase defense expenditures for many years, has restricted expansion of training facilities. Because of the small size of the military elements and the scope of their technical requirements, particularly the navy and the air force, the government has relied to a large extent on foreign assistance in matters of training.

In December 1967 a national military academy was opened with French assistance at the former French camp site of Servières at Fondouk Djedad, south of Tunis. In 1978 the academy provided military leadership instruction to officer candidates of all three components of the TNA. Admission is competitive among those who have achieved a baccalaureate degree recognized by the Tunisian educational system. After completing the academy's course of instruction, graduates are usually sent to specialized training courses either within the military arm to which they are assigned or in technical schools operated by foreign countries acting as military assistance sponsors. As part of the military modernization program undertaken by the Tunisian government in the 1970s, the military academy has been expanded to provide more advanced combat arms training. In early 1973 expansion of military training was extended to include places for reserve officers in the classes at the military academy. Under this plan the reservists were to receive training in functions of law enforcement and civic action by military units.

Training of potential enlisted conscripts begins in the secondary-school system, where members of the sixth-year classes of certain lycées receive preinduction military orientation as part of the curriculum. This program consists of physical training, close order drill, and orientation in certain technical skills at nearby army installations one day a week during the school year. Once conscripted into the TNA, inductees receive basic military training at an army training center near Bizerte. NCOs are trained at their own academy near Tunis. Various specialized schools have been established with foreign help to provide technicians for all three TNA components. Details of their location and curricula were not publicly available in 1978.

The Army

In 1978 the army—by far the largest and most developed branch of the TNA—was organized tactically into two combined arms regiments (essentially infantry), one commando regiment of paratroops, one regiment of desert troops, one artillery battalion, and one engineer battalion. The infantry, including the paratroop regiment—in the tradition of the French, an elite unit—was the mainstay of the army's field forces.

The pattern of TNA troop concentrations, which could not be determined from publicly available sources, was thought to be integrated with that of the reserve forces, which were scattered throughout the country. Most of the active-duty and reserve units, however, were known to be using installations developed by the French during the protectorate period. One authoritative source has reported that roughly 7,000 members of the army are garrisoned permanently in the Tunis area, where their ability to back up the police elements has occasionally been required to quell public disorders (see Threats to Internal Security, this ch.).

In mid-1976 the army demonstrated its mobility and willingness to perform its primary mission of defense against external threats during growing unease in Tunis over unfriendly actions by Libya's head of state, Colonel Muammar al Qadhaafi (see ch. 4). Libya's expulsion of some 15,000 Tunisians and Tunisia's arrest and trial of Libyans alleged to have been part of a plot to kidnap or assassinate Tunisian leaders aroused the government, which interpreted these actions as pointed threats to national security. Qadhaafi's open vow "to bury" the regimes of Bourguiba and Egypt's Anwar al Sadat underlined for Tunisians the seriousness of the situation. Releasing information to the domestic press that Qadhaafi was training 2,400 young Tunisian leftists at guerrilla warfare camps in Libya, the Nouira government indicated that the trainees would be "capable of revolutionary action [in Tunisia] at the opportune moment." In response to the prevailing tension much of the Tunisian army was placed on alert and moved to positions along the Libyan border.

Although in earlier periods of history Tunisian soldiers had an excellent fighting record, as demonstrated by creditable service in the French army before independence, the modern army of 1978 was untested in battle. The battalions that assisted in the Congo crisis of 1960 served as UN peacekeeping forces and saw little, if any, combat action. Similarly a cease-fire was declared during the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967 before the symbolic contingent of army troops Bourguiba offered to the Arabs could be committed. The small military contingent contributed by Tunisia to the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli October War of 1973 may have gained valuable experience in terms of wartime planning, military deployment, and logistical support. But the army forces that were involved hardly encountered combat experience. Their contribution was more valuable in terms of their government's stake in the future of inter-Arab relations (see Mashriq Relations, ch. 4).

Aside from its secondary mission of aiding police in the maintenance of internal security, the army since its formation has been responsive to needs for military assistance in civic development programs. Much of this response has come from the engineer battalion and vast numbers of conscripts who have labored on construction projects or in the building of transportation facilities. Observers, however, have reported that the younger soldiers at

times have shown as little enthusiasm for this tertiary mission as they have for their role as surrogate policemen.

In early 1975 the government instituted a new program to reduce the pressures of civic action on the TNA and to plug loopholes in the national conscription system that permitted an estimated two-thirds of eligible Tunisian youth to avoid active military service. Established as law by action of the National Assembly, the program was designated National Service and was, according to some observers, inspired by a similar program adopted earlier with much success by neighboring Algeria. The announced object of National Service was to ensure that all young Tunisians, including those ineligible for military service, were given the opportunity to serve their country in its economic, social, and cultural development.

Under the National Service law, which operates in conjunction with military conscription requirements, Tunisian youth who reach age twenty are expected to serve either in uniform for one year or for a like period on such programs as rural roadbuilding, laying of railroad track, retimbering of land, control of desert encroachment, and construction of wharves and rural housing units. The program operates as a responsibility of the army, but various ministries provide technical planning and supervision of the work programs. In practice the projects involving National Service conscripts are designed to avoid competition with workers in high unemployment areas. Almost all, therefore, are located in remote rural regions of the country. In 1976 approximately 3,000 young people served in National Service, and plans outlined by the minister of defense called for expansion of the program in 1977 and 1978.

The Navy

When the naval element of the TNA was established in 1959, the government foresaw a perennial need for the protection of its vast expanse of coastline, a requirement that had received considerable attention from the French during the protectorate era. With French assistance—advisory personnel and several small patrol vessels—the new navy assumed responsibilities for coastal protection, enforcement of customs regulations, and rescue operations within territorial waters. Training of naval personnel was carried out by the French at the well-appointed Bizerte facilities they had earlier relinquished and at naval schools in France.

As more naval assistance was provided and new vessels came into the inventory from France, the United States, and the United Kingdom, the numbers of personnel needed to carry out the essentially coast guard mission expanded. By 1966 the naval complement consisted of 500 officers and men; by 1971 it had been raised to 800. With government expansion of the fishing industry and the increased burden of coping with customs activities, navy personnel strength jumped to 2,000 in 1972, and it has been more

or less stabilized at that level. Conscripts are taken into the navy but in fewer numbers than in the army.

In carrying out its duties the navy has coordinated its activities with elements of the Ministry of the Interior in providing assistance to combat the smuggling of contraband, illegal entry of undesirable aliens, unauthorized emigration, and other security activities affecting the coastal areas. In these matters the overall effort has been shared with customs agents and immigration personnel of the Sûreté Nationale (national police).

Throughout the 1970s the navy has responded to government concerns about unauthorized use of Tunisian fishing waters through aggressive actions against encroaching foreign fishing fleets. In what many observers have described as a "sardine war," armed patrol boats have repeatedly engaged Italian vessels from Sicily, firing on them and forcing them into Tunisian ports for the imposition of heavy fines.

The navy also backed up the government's position on at least one occasion in the ten-year dispute with Libya over location of the maritime border between the two countries in the Gulf of Gabes (see Maghribi Relations, ch. 4). In February 1977—before settlement of the issue—the navy sent its flagship, the frigate *Bourguiba*, into the disputed area, where it fired on an oil drilling rig operated by Italians under contract with Libya. The Libyan government reacted by dispatching its own frigate to the area, but the Tunisian action dissuaded the Italians from further operations.

The Air Force

Last of the TNA elements to be established, the air force has suffered from a variety of problems associated with the formation of a military element that is extremely expensive and requires a large number of highly trained technicians. From a personnel strength of 500 officers and men in 1966—five years after its establishment—the air force had reached a somewhat stabilized level of 1,700 by 1972. As in the navy, about 500 conscripts were included in the personnel complement of the air arm in 1978.

Throughout its development the air force has faced a shortage of pilots and operationally useful combat aircraft. The nucleus of the initial air element was predicated on fifteen primary trainers and pilot training purchased from Sweden in 1960 and 1961. Italy provided further assistance of the same sort in 1965 and 1966. Subsequently France and the United States entered into agreements with the Tunisian government to assist in matters of training, equipment, and establishment of the air force's technical support system.

The air force has three principal missions: aerial defense of national territory, assisting the police in internal security matters, and assisting the navy in air-sea rescue operations. In 1978 the Tunisian air arm remained the weakest and least developed in North Africa. Equipped with twenty-four combat aircraft, some of which had a dual role as trainers, the air force was looking forward

to upgrading its inventory of fighter-interceptors. As of late 1978, however, the government remained undecided on whether to seek F-5E aircraft from the United States or Mirage F-1s from France.

Organized into one fighter squadron, one counterinsurgency (COIN) squadron, a training unit, and a small support unit equipped with light transport aircraft and helicopters, the air force was the major recipient of the government's effort to modernize the TNA. The units operated from air facilities established by the French during the protectorate period and further developed by them for use by the Tunisian squadrons of the French air force during World War II. In 1978 the main base was at Sidi Ahmed near Bizerte. Other airbases were near Safaqis, Jarbah, and Qafsah. In addition the air force could use the runways and technical support facilities of the country's major commercial airports under conditions of operational emergencies.

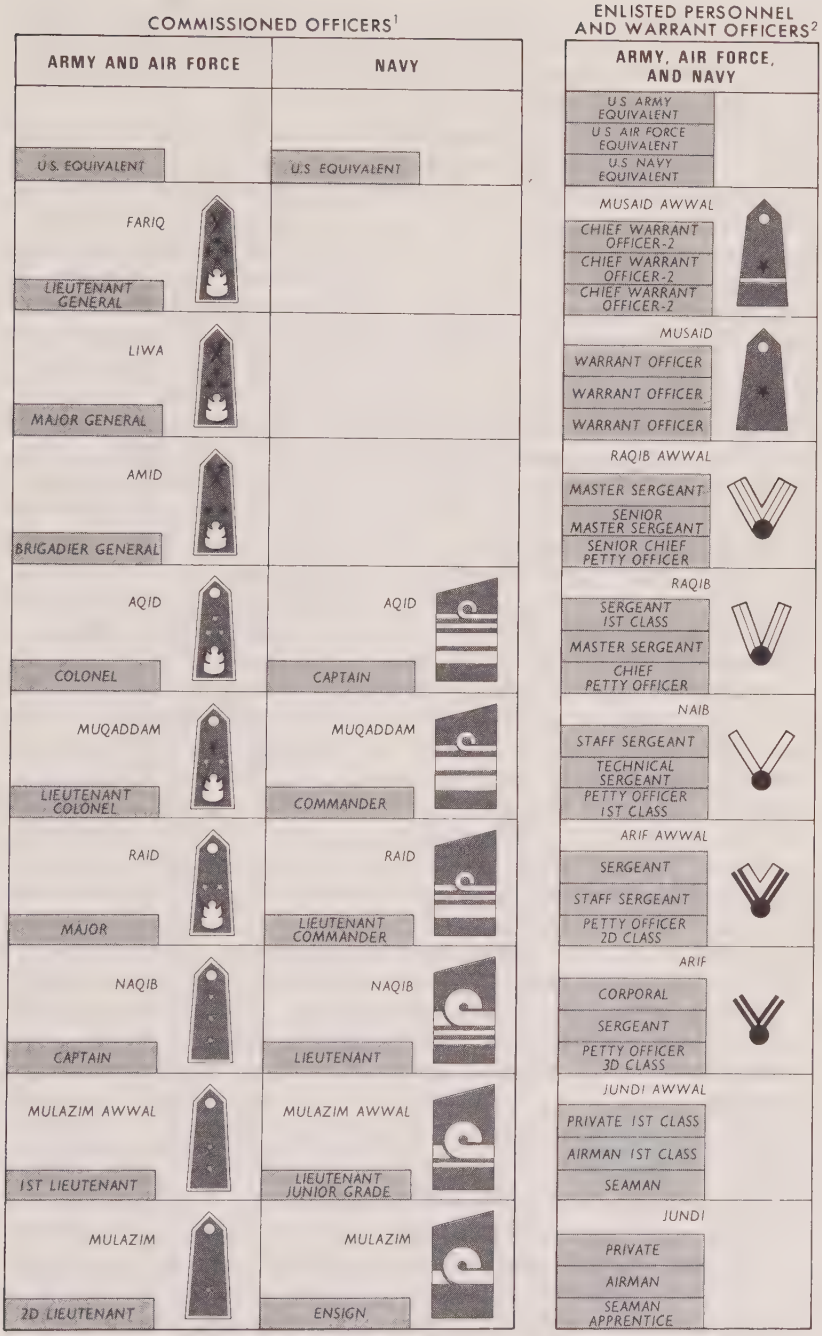
Uniforms, Ranks, and Insignia

The uniforms adopted by the TNA in 1956 basically reflected the French tradition, particularly those worn by units in the field. Modifications have occurred since then, however, and the modern uniforms of all services have a closer resemblance to those worn by eastern Arab military personnel. The traditional French collar patches have been retained.

By law eighteen grades are prescribed in the rank structure for the TNA from the most senior officer to the most basic enlisted serviceman or servicewoman (see fig. 13). Considering the comparatively modest size of the military establishment, the rank structure appears to be somewhat inflated. In the case of officers the highest grade authorized is that of *fariq* (equivalent to lieutenant general in the United States army and air force). Given a total personnel strength of only 9,200 officers and men of regular cadre status in the entire TNA, an officer rank structure that included three general officer grades also was an indication of the void that existed between the senior members of the officer corps and their younger compatriots, most of whom served in grades below that of *raid* (major). Higher officer ranks were reserved for the more reliable, apolitical general staff and PSD loyalists. Senior officer grades for the navy and air force did not yet include general officer standing because of the small size of these two services and the developing nature of their status within the TNA structure.

Military Assistance

Since independence Tunisia has remained heavily dependent on foreign sources for military training, armament, and other defense-related equipment. Even so, it has been circumspect in its agreements with foreign suppliers, choosing to devote the larger share of its monetary investments to projects of national development rather than trying to achieve undue military prominence. Military assistance has been supplied largely by NATO countries, chiefly the United States and France. In keeping with the coun-



[1]There are no authorized grades higher than aqid in Air Force and Navy
[2]No insignia are worn by the ranks of jundi and jundi awwal

Figure 13. Military Ranks and Insignia and United States Equivalents, 1978

try's official nonaligned stance, however, some military aid has been received from communist countries. In 1977, for example, two coastal patrol boats were received by the Tunisian navy from the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The United States has provided military aid to the Bourguiba regime since 1957. Equipment for the TNA has ranged from combat aircraft, helicopters, naval vessels, air-to-surface and air-to-air missiles, and armored fighting vehicles to small arms and ammunition. American military personnel have provided training to TNA officers and technicians in the use of such equipment. Officers of the three TNA component services have attended service schools in the United States, have toured American defense installations, and have trained with American units in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). In 1967 a military liaison office was established in Tunisia and was attached to the American embassy in Tunis. Its personnel have provided the TNA with training programs directed at improving the country's self-defense capability and have advised on acquisition of equipment. With the move by the Tunisian government to modernize its armed forces, American aid has increased. Much of the assistance provided by the United States for this program has included equipment and training to upgrade the capabilities of the air force and to achieve a measure of defense against possible aerial threats.

France also has furnished considerable military assistance and has had a marked influence on the TNA's establishment at all levels. A French liaison unit within the Ministry of Defense has provided guidance in organizational, planning, and logistical matters, chiefly for the army and navy. The French have trained officers and NCOs at army, navy, and air force academies in France and have assigned officers to TNA schools and operating units for domestic training guidance. French equipment provided to Tunisia has included trainer and transport aircraft, helicopters, naval vessels—some equipped with surface-to-surface missiles—armored fighting vehicles, artillery, small arms, and ammunition.

In its quest to attain a credible defense posture, Tunisia has been aided also by the United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy, Austria, West Germany, the Soviet Union, the PRC, and Czechoslovakia. Exchange visits between the defense ministers of these countries and the Nouira government have continued throughout the late 1970s, indicating a perennial interest in Tunisian military goals.

Public Order and Internal Security

Public order founded on supremacy of the law is a concept that has been stressed increasingly by the government as a prerequisite to the achievement of national development goals. During the first decade of independence efforts to maintain order and internal security were supported by the widespread public respect in which the government was held and the charismatic stature of President Bourguiba, hero and Supreme Combatant of the independence movement. In obtaining popular support he was aided

by the pervasive organization and authority of the country's only legal political party, the PSD, which operated as an effective instrument in maintaining control over potential social disturbances. Party leaders maintained close contact not only with the central, regional, and local officials but also with all levels of life throughout the young republic. To enhance this political leverage the government instituted a comprehensive system of statutory law to deter and punish criminal activity and established professional police units as enforcement agents. The course of progress for the young state, however, has not been at all times devoid of public tensions and antisocial behavior, nor has the government in power functioned free of political opposition (see Opposition, ch. 4).

In 1971 the UN Social Defense Research Institute conducted a study of the roles and attitudes of the Tunisian people regarding criminal justice in their country. Included in the UN report was an examination of the influence of Islamic culture, the experience of colonialization by the French, and the forces of modernization and change since independence on the development of Tunisian criminal justice institutions and on public attitudes. Records of the police and the criminal courts were studied, and statistics were compiled on the denunciations, testimony, and other information of witnesses concerning criminal cases. Further data were obtained from sample questionnaires submitted to representative segments of the population. The study interpreted the responses as indicating serious public disaffection with judicial institutions. It concluded overall that Tunisia was experiencing a crisis of public support for its criminal justice system, as the social values of the public diverged from those expressed in the law.

It is difficult to determine whether the Tunisian government ever evaluated this UN study or to what extent it reacted to the stated conclusions. Nonetheless, throughout the 1970s growing public dissatisfaction with social anomalies has brought concomitant hardline reaction from the conservative ruling regime. Encounters have at times led to serious bloodshed, providing grounds for allegations of growing repression that have severely tested the future viability of the Tunisian one-party system.

The Police System

At independence responsibilities for maintaining public order and ensuring an acceptable level of internal security were assigned to two separate police organizations: the Sûreté Nationale, an outgrowth of the administrative branch of its French counterpart of the protectorate era, and the newly established Garde Nationale. The Sûreté assumed responsibility for police duties in the urban areas; the Garde acted as a rural police force, much in the manner of the French gendarmerie units that had served in Tunisia for this purpose until 1956. Since then the police system has been modified considerably as a result of experience gained during the two decades since its creation and as domestic needs have

dictated its expansion and upgrading to stay abreast of modern police practices. Modernization and increased efficiency have been achieved with the assistance of several foreign countries, principally France, the United States, and West Germany, which have provided technical advice, equipment, and training both in Tunisia and abroad.

Until 1967 the two police organizations operated autonomously, and the Garde was more related in its activities to the TNA, especially in such matters as interchange of officer and technical personnel, equipment, and training philosophy. Nonetheless, both police forces were under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior. In reaction to the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967, and especially after the anti-Jewish riots that occurred in Tunisia, the ministry was reorganized to centralize the control of domestic police functions and to clarify the separation of the Garde and the TNA, which had always been responsible to the Ministry of Defense. In this reorganization the two police forces were amalgamated under the Directorate of National Security Forces. In 1978 the senior police administrative positions—director of the Sûreté Nationale and commandant of the Garde Nationale—still existed, but control over the operational use of all Tunisian police units was the responsibility of the director general in charge of the Directorate of National Security Forces.

Inasmuch as it is larger and better equipped than any of the police elements, the TNA is also charged with guaranteeing public order in times of crisis or during periods of major political, social, or economic change. In such circumstances the military—particularly the army—serves as a backup to the police when needed.

The government has had little difficulty in its efforts to maintain an adequate number of recruits for the police services. When formed initially, both elements conducted recruitment among politically reliable party members, *fellaghas*, and men who had served with French law enforcement agencies. Since this initial effort, pay and conditions of service have been maintained at levels that have continued to attract recruits who prefer the security of government jobs rather than the uncertainty many face in the civilian sector with its high unemployment rate.

Sûreté Nationale

In 1978 the Sûreté Nationale—in effect a national police force—remained the primary enforcement authority in the principal cities and other urban centers. It was charged with the maintenance of public order, protection of life and property, investigation of crimes, and the apprehension of offenders. In addition it performed other routine police functions, including traffic control. Total personnel strength of the Sûreté was not publicly available but has been estimated at roughly 9,000 men and women.

The Sûreté is believed to be organized generally along the lines of its French counterpart with operational and investigative branches and supporting services. The section best known to the

public is made up of the uniformed urban police, segments of which are assigned to each of the eighteen governorates. These elements are under the nominal control of the individual governors, but they are nonetheless basically reponsible to the director general of the Directorate of National Security Forces in Tunis. A separate section of the Sûreté handles functions that include border control, immigration service, political intelligence, presidential bodyguard responsibilities, and general information requirements. Other components are responsible for criminal files and for the Judiciary Police, crime research laboratories, a licensing bureau, and the prison system.

Most visible to the general public because it is the only uniformed branch, the urban police force is generally responsible for traffic control in cities where it is a problem. In recent years large numbers of women have been seen performing this function in Tunis. The urban corps performs other services, such as rendering first aid, locating missing persons, giving directions and other advice to travelers, and gathering information that may be useful to the other specialized branches of the Sûreté.

In the late 1960s, particularly after the ineffectual performance of the Sûreté in coping with the anti-Jewish riots of 1967 and the apparent insufficiency of police capabilities, the government established a unit of the Sûreté known as the Brigade of Public Order (Brigade de l'Ordre Publique—BOP). With American assistance in training and equipment, the six battalions of the paramilitary BOP specialize in tactics designed to be effective in controlling crowds and countering demonstrations and strike violence. Personnel for this riot squad unit, which numbered an estimated 5,000 men in 1978, have come largely from the Garde Nationale and from the army's growing pool of reservists.

Personnel for most of the other Sûreté elements, being public servants, are recruited in accordance with civil service regulations regarding government employment. The force has six categories of personnel, each divided into several classes based on seniority and achievement. The highest ranking group is that of the police superintendents, who are also authorized to exercise the powers of magistrates in administrative, judicial, or municipal capacities. Most of them are recruited by means of a competitive examination offered to all civil service applicants with a diploma from a higher educational institution. The rest are selected from among officers of the Garde Nationale, the army, the police system, and the regional administrations. This group appears to be highly qualified. Frequent transfers tend to keep them under the influence of the central government and out of local politics.

The second highest rank, known as police officials, assist the superintendents in the performance of their duties and perform additional investigative and administrative tasks. The majority of them are recruited by a special competitive examination for police applicants and the rest by selection from police personnel with a

minimum of three years' experience and from the Garde Nationale.

Police secretaries, the third rank, assist the police officials in their investigative duties and are responsible for the administrative work of the Sûreté system. They are recruited partly by tests for all applicants who have at least six years of secondary education and partly by tests for candidates with general qualifications for employment in the police. The Sûreté director decides in each case the form of the examination and the credits to be given for police experience.

Technical police detectives, who make up the fourth category, are charged with identifications, documentations, and technical and scientific tasks required by the police. Recruitments are handled as for secretaries. Inspectors—the fifth-ranking group—work under the direction of superintendents and officials. Most of the inspectors are recruited by tests for civil service applicants with a high school diploma and the rest by application of Sûreté personnel with eighteen months' experience.

The uniformed urban police corps, known as police constables, are the sixth category. Of these, some are recruited from students at the police academy and others by competitive examinations. Candidates must pass a strict physical examination, have good uncorrected vision, be literate, and have passed tests in motor vehicle operation and athletic ability.

Applicants accepted by the Sûreté are trained at its academy at Bir bu Ruqbah. The duration of their course varies with the service in which they are enrolled and is fixed for each applicant by the Sûreté director. Members of the force may be called upon at any time to take a special training course at the police academy, at a Tunisian college, or with a government agency. All except those in the grade of superintendent may be required to take any physical education or sports training the administrative section may organize.

In 1978 the director general of the Directorate of National Security Forces was Colonel Zayn al Abdin ibn Ali, a protégé of rightist Defense Minister Abdulla Farhat. Zayn, a former officer in the TNA, was appointed to the sensitive position when Farhat temporarily assumed control over the Ministry of the Interior in December 1977 after the ouster of moderate Taher Belkhodja (see Major Political Developments, ch. 4). Zayn underwent military training in the United States and was regarded highly in American circles as a competent and reliable officer. His appointment to the police administration post appeared to have been based in large measure on the hardline defense minister's desire to ensure the reliability of the police forces and to obviate any possible opposition from them during the political maneuvering over the question of eventual presidential succession (see Threats to Internal Security, this ch.).

The Tunisian army passes in review
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

Traffic police, Tunis
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia

While police organizations and activities usually do not receive widespread publicity in Tunisia, one element of the Sûreté seldom if ever draws comment by the government. This is a special section of the force known as the Directorate of Territorial Surveillance, which is responsible for far-reaching intelligence and counterespionage operations. Because of the clandestine methods used by its plainclothes personnel, this organization has engendered some fear and apprehension among the general public that it in effect constitutes a secret police of classic proportions. Widespread adverse reactions to alleged repressive tactics, including physical torture and psychological duress, have increased during the 1970s in publications of the international media. Amnesty International, the London-based organization whose efforts in the field of human rights won it the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize, has been particularly graphic in its published condemnations of such procedures. Similar publicity also has surfaced in France and West Germany. In the mid-1970s West German television broadcast a special program to viewers expressing strong disapproval of the practice of torture by Tunisia's "political police." Veiled accusations have also persisted regarding possible police involvement in the murder of opposition leader Salah Ben Youssef, which occurred in Frankfurt in 1961, and allegations of similar efforts against Ahmed Ben Salah during the years he has sought refuge in Europe after his escape from a Tunisian prison. The Tunisian government vehemently denies such allegations.

On February 3, 1978, the United States Department of State submitted a document entitled *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* to the United States House of Representatives Committee on International Relations and the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. The report, in part, stated that "Tunisia is working to maintain a democratic system in the face of external antagonisms and internal economic and political pressures. The Tunisian Government is increasingly aware of the importance of human rights as both a domestic and an international issue." Regarding allegation of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of Tunisians, the State Department reports that "the U.S. Government has no evidence that would confirm them."

Garde Nationale

The rural police force that was formed at independence—the Garde Nationale—assumed the investigative and internal security tasks formerly carried out by the units of the French gendarmerie. As the Garde became solidified in national life as a major institution of the police system, it became an important source of manpower for the country's urban police as well as for rural law enforcement. Eventually a large segment of the Garde consisted of a rural gendarmerie, which became active in all areas of the country where urban elements of the Sûreté did not exist. Other Garde

units provided a highway patrol force, and still others served as presidential bodyguards and ceremonial troops for state occasions. In 1978 its personnel strength—including the rural gendarmerie elements—was estimated at roughly 9,000 officers and men; of this number 5,000, organized in six battalions, were assigned to gendarmerie duties.

Because of its size, training, equipment inventory, and tactical deployment capability, the Garde is a versatile paramilitary force. In operational terms it has been described as a combination rural security force and national guard always on active duty. In contrast with its Sûreté counterpart, the Garde is responsible for aiding the army in counterinsurgency tasks when needed. In times of emergency its mission is to attempt, along with the BOP, to employ crowd-control techniques. In addition to its paramilitary duties, the Garde has worked to create an improved environment through civic action, including assisting in public works projects and aiding people involved in local disasters.

Personnel requirements of the Garde are met through recruitment in accordance with civil service regulations. In general most of the troop strength consists of former army enlisted men and junior NCOs who have completed their military training with the TNA and have further commitments in the army reserves. Applicants selected for service with this police element receive instruction at the separate Garde training academy at Bir bu Fishah for periods established by the service's commandant. Credit is given for previous military training and experience, but the minimum duration of attendance at the academy is six months.

Incidence of Crime

Statistics on urban criminal activity are reported by the Sûreté, and those on rural offenses are obtained by the central government from the Garde. In the early 1970s statistics indicated that the rate of criminal offenses was increasing but was still low compared with many other developing countries. Commonly attributed causes of this increase included the quickening of urbanization and industrialization and such social changes as the emancipation of women, high unemployment, and the rapid alteration of cultural and economic values.

Given the absence of comprehensive current government statistics on criminal activity in 1978, a definitive analysis of the scope of crime in contemporary Tunisia was impossible. Even so, certain trends have been reflected by the international media, in speeches by government officials, and in the announcement of legislation aimed at controlling and deterring criminal behavior. Reports and documents produced by critics of the Tunisian system of criminal justice, such as Amnesty International, have centered on political offenders and their treatment by the police, the courts, and the prison authorities.

The government has been quick to rebut such publicity, pointing out that a recognized definition of political crime does not exist

in Tunisian law. Offenses that are categorized as political in most Western nations are in Tunisia violations of the Penal Code or other statutes. While technically correct, the application of these laws to such violators is left to the interpretation of the public prosecutor and the criminal courts. Thus the classic differentiation between "ordinary crime" and "political offenses" appears to be inappropriate in any discussion of Tunisian criminal activity.

Not surprisingly, the crime problem is more acute in urban areas than in the rural environment. Moreover, the scope and pattern of criminal activity in heavily populated cities is more complex and varied. Homicide, forgery, abortion, libel, failure to pay debts, fraud, intoxication, and disturbing the peace are more common in the urban areas. Rural offenses consist mainly of theft and related acts, such as aggravated assault. Theft on a larger scale is common in cities and has tended to increase in frequency as a consequence of the continuing migration of people from rural areas and small towns. Resort to theft is heightened by inadequate incomes stemming from a high unemployment rate and a growing influx of affluent tourists, who are ready targets for those who steal for a living. Violations of the myriad laws affecting state security and public order are largely an urban phenomenon. These offenses include such diverse acts as treason, defamation of the president and the government, circulating unauthorized publications inimical to government interests, conducting strikes without appropriate notice, sabotage, and illegal possession of weapons, ammunition, or other means of violence.

There are some kinds of crime that are not always reported to police but are discovered through investigation and arrest. According to informed observers these offenses constitute a perennial police problem—often more time consuming than those involving complaints or reports by citizens. Such offenses include prostitution, vagrancy, and drug abuse. Prostitution is illegal, and from time to time efforts are made to stem its practice. Begging is also illegal, and numerous arrests on charges of vagrancy are made each year. The problem is not easily resolved, however, given the traditional Islamic duty of almsgiving and the continuing migration of indigent rural people to the cities, where the opportunity for monetary gain by such means is greater.

Arrests for intoxication reflect the use of illegal drugs such as *kif* (hashish) as well as often-forbidden alcoholic beverages. Information on the scale of drug offenses was not available publicly in 1978, but it was thought that the use and sale of *kif* remained relatively traditional practices. Although drug offenses probably are not as widespread as in some other countries of the area, the cultivation and use of *kif* is relatively common in much of North Africa. Tunisian law does not make a distinction between use and sale of illegal drugs; severe penalties are applied equally to those found guilty by the courts of either act. Violators are subject to a maximum of five years' imprisonment and fines up to TD10,000

(for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary). This law may well have had the deterrent effect its drafters desired.

In many developing countries governments rarely talk openly about corruption that might exist in official circles. Exceptions to this reluctance have been made occasionally in Tunisia, where offenders have seen their indiscretions publicized in detail in the semiofficial press as an example aimed at deterring others. A good example of this was seen in the media coverage in late 1976 of a case involving a number of government workers and the fraudulent misuse of ministerial gasoline and fuel oil coupons for personal profit. Government leaders, including President Bourguiba and Prime Minister Nouira, have often included in their addresses to national organizations pointed denunciations of corruption. These remarks usually have characterized corrupt practices as a legacy of centuries of backwardness and colonialism and have reminded listeners that it is the duty of the party and the state to train the people to overcome this tendency.

Juvenile delinquency did not present a serious problem in Tunisia during the first decade of independence, and special provisions of the law shielded young persons between the ages of thirteen and sixteen from the criminal courts and penalties to which adult offenders were subjected. The Penal Code now applies to minors of this age spread, although the courts may reduce the maximum possible sentences, particularly where serious offenses are involved. Increases in juvenile crime have been recorded throughout the 1970s, mainly because of the phenomenally high proportion of young people in the population, the lack of employment opportunities, insufficient facilities for vocational training, the adverse effects of rapid urbanization, and the gradual erosion of family influence and traditional values (see Social Structure and Values, ch. 2). Apart from the politically related offenses committed in increasing frequency by students, the most common form of juvenile crime is petty theft. The preponderance of these young offenders belong to the poorer segments of underprivileged urban society.

In the matter of juvenile offenses the government long has believed that punitive measures should be used only as a last resort. Consequently efforts to combat this class of criminal activity have emphasized preventive methods. Strengthening of the family environment has received government attention, and efforts have been made to halt the breakdown of family groups caused by migration to the cities. Polygyny has been prohibited, birth control has been advocated and methods made available, and abortion has been legalized in certain circumstances. Educational and preventive programs are planned by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Information and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Reeducation centers at Gammarth and Safaqis allow juvenile offenders to be rehabilitated without contact with adult criminals. Functioning under the Ministry of Education, these centers pro-

vide both classroom experience and vocational training in a variety of trades and agriculture. All are supervised by trained social workers. When the young people complete their stay, certificates of occupational aptitude or apprenticeship are issued as in other Tunisian schools. Separate centers for boys and girls involved in criminal activity are available for psychiatric investigation to aid the courts when necessary.

Criminal Justice System

Tunisian jurisprudence has undergone radical change during the last century, particularly since 1956 as the government has sought to adjust the legal system to the country's independent status (see Judiciary, ch. 4). Unlike the United States and the United Kingdom, where the legal systems depend on case law or earlier judicial decisions as well as on statutory law, the whole body of Tunisian law is now codified. The codes relating to criminal justice have application everywhere in the country with equal effect on Tunisian citizens and foreign nationals visiting or residing there.

As part of the French effort to modernize the traditional legal system during the protectorate period, the Tunisian Penal Code was first enacted by a beylical decree in 1913 and was amended after independence in 1956. Similarly the Code of Criminal Procedure was introduced in 1921 but was amended extensively by the Bourguiba government in 1968. Not surprisingly both codes still reflect strongly the legal tradition of France that served as a basic model.

Penal Code

Although the Penal Code is the basic collection of Tunisian criminal law, many other codified legal sources, such as the Press Code and the Code of Personal Status, also provide guidance on certain criminal offenses. The Penal Code consists of articles separated into three sections, entitled General Provisions, Various Offenses and Their Punishments, and Violations. The first of these defines basic principles of criminal justice common to the legal systems of many other countries. Clearly stated, for example, is the principle that an act is not deemed to be an offense unless its commission is prohibited by temporal law at the time it occurs. This feature precludes the application of any aspects of the traditional sharia to contemporary criminal cases.

Following French legal tradition, offenses are divided into three categories, depending on the seriousness of the act; punishments are designed to fit the offense. *Crimes*, a class of criminal offenses that would be termed felonies under English law, are serious acts punishable by death or prison sentences exceeding five years. *Délits*, equivalent in English law to misdemeanors, are acts punishable by sixteen days to five years in prison or by a fine of more than TD60. *Contraventions* are minor violations for which punish-

ment of not more than fifteen days in prison or fines of less than TD60 may be imposed.

The code's last two sections deal categorically with various offenses and their prescribed penalties. Punishments are classified as principal and accessory. The latter may be imposed additionally at the discretion of the court in cases where a principal punishment has been assessed. Accessory punishments include such measures as forbidding a convicted person to be in certain places for up to twenty years, denial of voting rights, prohibiting the convicted party from carrying arms, confiscation of property, and restrictions against the practice of certain professions. Recidivists are especially subject to accessory punishments, and many first offenders are required to perform work that is regarded by the courts as rehabilitating. Principal punishments include death by hanging (or by firing squad in serious offenses against state security), hard labor for life, hard labor for specified terms, imprisonment, and a variety of fines. Death sentences are reserved for those convicted of such *crimes* as treason, attempts against the life of the president, certain acts that threaten the national security, premeditated homicide, and arson that results in the deaths of victims. The code grants to the president the power to pardon anyone upon whom the death sentence is imposed, and Bourguiba has exercised it on several occasions.

Offenses are grouped as *crimes* and *délits* against the state, persons, and property and *contraventions* of all sorts. Offenses against the state include a wide variety of acts, such as treason, corruption by a public official, insulting the president, unauthorized assembly or association, inciting illegal strikes, and defaming the TNA. The Tunisian Penal Code contains few of the Islamic restrictions commonly found in the laws of Muslim countries. Instead it reflects a governmental concern for modernization and national economic development. At the same time, however, it contains none of the provisions dealing with economic offenses that are heavily stressed in the penal code of neighboring Algeria.

Code of Criminal Procedure

The revised Code of Criminal Procedure is characterized by emphasis on two major areas: simplification of procedures from the level of investigation to judgment and protection of the rights of the accused. When the code was promulgated in July 1968, the government stressed its interest in ensuring that justice should be clear, fair, and speedy to be effective in repressing crime.

The code, which guides the handling of criminal offenses, consists of five books, outlining the course to the followed in investigations, judgment, appeals, execution of sentences, and matters of extradition. Under the code two legal actions can result from each detected offense. A public action in which charges are brought against the accused by the state may be accompanied by a private action in which the victim of the offense seeks personal damages. The code permits such cases to be tried simultaneously,

thus again emulating French legal processes. Persons who are in a "demented state" when committing an offense and young people under the age of thirteen years are not subject to criminal liability.

In Tunisia the public prosecutor is a key figure in criminal procedure. Offenses reported to any civil or police official are submitted to him, and he supervises the resulting criminal investigation by the Judiciary Police of the Sûreté Nationale. The police take necessary action to determine whether a violation of law has occurred and in so doing gather evidence and interrogate suspects. Arraignment is conducted before a judge of instruction, who performs the function of a grand jury. If a case goes to trial, it is conducted for the state by the public prosecutor or his assistants. The jury system was abolished in May 1966, upon the advice of judges that juries were obstructing the speedy administration of justice. Subsequently trials have been held before a judge—or judges—depending on the severity of the offense and the level at which the trial is conducted. Thus the judge or judges, with the help of legal advisers, must decide questions of fact as well as questions of law. To prove his case in a trial involving a *crime* or a *délit*, the public prosecutor must establish that the accused committed the offense voluntarily. Proof of intent is not required, however, where the charge is a *contravention*.

Trials are open to the public except in rare extenuating circumstances. The trial begins with opening statements by the prosecution and defense, usually followed by the interrogation of the defendant by the presiding judge. Witnesses are then examined, directly by the prosecution and indirectly through the judge by the defendant's attorney. After examination of witnesses for the state and for the accused, closing statements are made, and the court retires to deliberate findings. The judge then makes and announces the final decision and either discharges the prisoner or pronounces sentence.

With the goal of speedier administration of justice, the law that abolished the jury system also reduced the period of time allowed for appeals. The time allowed a defendant to file in a court of appeal was reduced from twenty to ten days; in the Court of Cassation it was reduced from one month to ten days. The Court of Cassation was empowered to reject appeals it deemed unworthy, and the length of pretrial investigations was shortened. In order to ensure the more rapid handling of minor offenses, the jurisdiction of cantonal courts was enlarged to include all misdemeanors with a prison term of up to one year. The most important change was the provision for the immediate execution by intermediary courts of sentences other than the death penalty, despite the possibility of appeal. These changes were to prevent postponement of justice by convicted persons wishing to delay final judgments. It was thought that the accused, whether free on bail or in preventive custody, was being accorded special advantages. Often a court of appeal

sentence could not be carried out because the penalty had already been served in custody.

Article 12 of the Constitution provides that the accused is considered innocent until proven guilty in court, where he is guaranteed "the necessary conditions of self-defense." The defendant's right to legal representation exists throughout the criminal court system. In the higher courts of general jurisdiction, a lawyer is appointed if the defendant demonstrates his inability to afford counsel. The right to bail also exists, except in cases of serious felonies or when it is deemed necessary in the public interest to confine the accused. Confessions made under duress are not admissible in court.

The 1968 amendments of the code extended the rights of accused persons. In cases of a death penalty, appeal to the Court of Cassation is automatic, except in cases tried before the State Security Court where judgments are final. Preventive detention while awaiting judgment is "an exceptional measure" limited to specified circumstances. It must not exceed five days after an interrogation in favor of the accused, if his prior record shows less than a year of imprisonment. Besides these innovations, the new code reaffirms the rights of defense, including the right to present evidence and examine witnesses.

Prisons

Imprisonment in one of the country's penal institutions is the most common form of punishment levied on adult offenders by courts of the criminal justice system. As in many other developing states with a colonial history, Tunisia's penal system carries the indelible stamp of this legacy of repression, and efforts to bring about reforms have necessarily had to compete with a broad range of other social and economic development goals.

The penal system is a responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior and is administered by a department of the Sûreté Nationale. In 1978 it included central prisons at Tunis, Bajah, Bizerte, Qabis, Qafsah, Al Qayrawan, Al Kaf, Safaqis, Susah, and Bardo and other smaller facilities at less populated centers. Habitual criminals (recidivists) were usually sentenced to hard labor at the agricultural penitentiary at Jabal Faqirin. All of the prisons had been established by the French during the protectorate era.

Attempts have been made to provide facilities and personnel to differentiate kinds of offenders. Wherever possible, juveniles are separated from adult prisoners, and most of the central prisons have segregated sections for men and women. For prisoners other than hardened criminals, increasing attention has been given to rehabilitation programs in an effort to reduce recidivism. Selected prisoners serving sentences of less than five years may be transferred from the maximum security prisons to open camps called reeducation centers for social rehabilitation. Here they perform useful work in or outside the camp for which they receive a token wage. Arrangements are made for their employment on discharge.

In the past the public has been generally reluctant to accept ex-convicts as potentially useful members of society. The imposition of special residence requirements, rejection by possible employers, and the hostility of some members of the judiciary and the police have made it difficult for former prisoners to readapt to the society outside prison walls. Industrial training has been instituted in many prisons, however, and public opinion is being reeducated slowly to counteract criticism that prisoners receive preferential treatment on matters of hiring in relation to unemployed persons who have not committed punishable offenses.

Prison conditions during the seventy-five years of colonial administration were generally grim, and the crowded institutions were usually the sources of labor crews used in construction projects, road maintenance, and general clean-up tasks. Reforms have proceeded slowly since independence, but some improvements have apparently been made, according to a report on prison conditions issued in Tunis in December 1977 by the Tunisian League for the Rights of Man. The report was made by members of the league who had been invited by the minister of the interior to visit any six prisons of their choice during the preceding October. The visits were arranged in response to growing criticism of the penal system by the league and increased allegations by opposition groups, trade union militants, and student agitators that prisoners were being treated inhumanely.

In the first demonstration of the league's efforts in the field of human rights since its founding in May 1977, the report was circulated to the public. In it the league's visiting delegation stated that, from what it could determine during its nine-day inspection, the conditions in the prisons visited had improved somewhat during the past two years. All cells had been equipped with beds and mattresses, and all had loudspeakers through which radio and television programs could be heard. Classes aimed at reducing illiteracy among inmates had been formed, and vocational training was being provided to some prisoners. To some extent health care available to the prison population had improved. At the same time, however, the report was critical of the fact that no new penal institutions had been built since independence. Other prison shortcomings deplored by the league report included the prison food rations, inadequate size of prisoners' cells, and brevity of visits by prisoners' families and friends. The league was also critical of the length of time accused persons were kept in police detention before being brought to trial.

Threats to Internal Security

In the two decades since independence Tunisia—a developing country dedicated to modernization of its society and, in the process, to national economic development—has built up an international reputation as a North African republic inclined in many respects toward the goals and aspirations of Western-style democracies. Under PSD leadership its government has enjoyed pro-

longed political stability. During most of this period Tunisian citizens in general have acted responsibly with regard to increased personal and civil liberties, although some opposition has arisen to the limits the regime in power has placed on political activity in the interest of national welfare. Because demonstrations of political opposition have been regarded as a threat to national security, dissent seldom has been expressed publicly except within the framework of party loyalty. Such opposition traditionally has been smoothed over by compromises on the part of the national leadership. Party control of public organizations and broad popular support for the government—at least through the late 1960s—tended to keep civil disorders to a minimum.

During the 1960s dissent over government actions arose from time to time, but the regime in power dealt with them swiftly and effectively. Religious and cultural traditionalists raised occasional objections to the general secularization of the society that the government long had advocated. Tunisians with vested economic interests, who felt threatened by official economic planning programs, engaged in periodic demonstrations. The impatient poor, whose standard of living failed to improve during the process of societal modernization, expressed discontent through the party or the General Tunisian Labor Union (Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail—UGTT). But beginning in the late 1960s signs of internal strife and dissidence began to appear more and more frequently in the growing disturbances involving young intellectuals—students and a few faculty members—at the country's institutions of higher education. By far the most articulate voices of the heretofore latent opposition, large numbers of students began for the first time to raise objections in public to government policies (see Students and Youth, ch. 4). Generally advocating more revolutionary approaches, this student unrest was firmly condemned by the government as the work of subversive elements and anarchists; but even the positive responses of internal security forces were unable to contain its spread.

The 1970s have been characterized by informed observers as a decade of increasing social unrest for Tunisians. Labor demands for better working conditions and wages and a growing bitterness over rising unemployment and the economic gap between the affluent and the poor elements of society have led to frequent military responses by organized labor. Strikes—illegal actions in Tunisia without prior governmental consent—have become more and more frequent, numbering approximately 600 from 1976 to mid-1978 alone. Most were illegal wildcat efforts, and gradually the militant UGTT began to reflect the appearance of an opposition group. When supplemented by the persistent dissidence of students who viewed the PSD as an outdated and increasingly ineffectual political party, strike actions posed a direct challenge to the government.

Increasingly the government has reacted to the dissidence of workers and students by a series of actions that have been promptly labeled as repressive by the dissenters. Increased use of police and other internal security forces has resulted in clashes—often bloody—with demonstrators. Widespread arrests have followed, and mass trials—often with several hundred defendants answering charges of violating state security and public order—have been held. But even severe prison sentences apparently have failed to deter the militant demands for change. Conversely, these demands have reflected mounting discontent among broad sectors of the Tunisian population. Many feel that the government has wasted too much time and effort attacking symptoms rather than causes.

The bloody violence connected with the UGTT's general strike of January 26, 1978, was the worst example of public dissidence to befall Tunisia since its independence (see Major Political Developments, ch. 4). The strike, which was interpreted by the government as a direct threat to its authority, brought about an initial confrontation between demonstrators and police units. When the crisis escalated and police were unable to contain the strikers, army units equipped with tanks and infantry weapons joined the fray to back up the police. Also involved were armed members of a PSD plainclothes militia, whose existence had never been admitted previously. Liberal opposition leader, Ahmed Mestiri—a former secretary of state for defense and minister of the interior before his ouster from the PSD in 1972—later attributed the frenzied action by demonstrators to provocations by the militia, allegedly carrying out orders of the party's director. In any event, reports of the ensuing violence indicated that coordination between the various security forces involved appeared to be lacking and that they showed a marked degree of inexperience in crowd control. Two days of violence raged before the security forces were able to restore order. Official government figures on casualties placed the number of dead at forty-two and the wounded at 325; unofficial but reliable reports indicated that at least 130 Tunisians were killed. The government stated that 400 rioters were arrested, but unofficial sources cited figures that ranged from 1,000 to 3,000. Extensive damage was inflicted to buildings and other facilities, particularly in the poorer sections of Tunis. Some army and police equipment was damaged or destroyed.

In the aftermath of the violence of so-called Black Thursday, the government on February 26 lifted the state of emergency order and the 8:00 P.M. to 4:00 A.M. curfew it had imposed on Tunis and its suburbs at the outset of the crisis. Prime Minister Nouira and other members of his government assessed the motives of labor elements involved in the riots, describing their moves as part of a "premeditated subversive plan to incite a general rebellion against the state." Detailed descriptions of the stockpiles of weapons collected by security forces were released to the media in

a clear attempt to demonstrate the insidious nature of the whole affair. The public prosecutor's office and the courts worked overtime to handle burgeoning case loads created by the mass arrests of demonstrators. Sentences handed down were stiff but generally were within the limits allowed by the laws covering the charges involved. The minister of the interior announced an amnesty of short duration on the illegal possession of weapons and urged that all unauthorized items be turned in immediately to the nearest police station or Garde Nationale barracks. Failure to do so within a prescribed time would make owners liable to punishment under the provisions of the country's special gun control law. Those possessing registered weapons and ammunition were cautioned to avoid carrying them in public and to keep them locked up to preclude further violence.

On March 7 the National Assembly passed a new law establishing an institution to be known as Civilian Service (Service Civile). Striking hard at the thousands of idle, unemployed youth—many were involved in the Black Thursday rioting—the law gave the state authority to conscript all unemployed Tunisians between the ages of eighteen and thirty. Conscripts would be sent to areas of labor shortages—specifically away from the cities and other urban areas—and to rural regions to work on agricultural and construction projects designed to further national development plans. The term of service would be one year but could be extended if government needs so dictated. A three-month term of service would be considered if a youth found suitable alternative employment. Depicted by critics as a program of forced labor, Civilian Service obviously would remove large numbers of jobless youth from city streets, thus eliminating disgruntled potential troublemakers. Moreover, the program would provide the government a convenient method of dealing with another of its long-standing sources of opposition. Students who failed to attend classes and spent time instead demonstrating against the authorities would also be drafted into Civilian Service.

The government, apparently realizing that the new law might well provoke further confrontation by hostile urban youth, has exerted great effort to depict the need for the program in terms of improving social conditions, particularly as a measure to resolve the acute problems of unemployment within the urban centers. Pointed emphasis has been made of the fact that the program has no connection with military service. Nonetheless, conscripts will be trained, housed, and subjected to military-style disciplinary measures; more significantly, the program will be conducted under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior, the agency responsible for internal security.

According to many informed observers, the public outbursts by workers and students have mirrored a growing power struggle within political circles over the question of presidential succession, a problem that seems to become more acute with each pass-

ing year (see Presidential Succession, ch. 4). On August 3, 1978, President-for-Life Bourguiba celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday. For some time the charismatic national leader has suffered the debilitating effects of arteriosclerosis and a persistent form of viral hepatitis, and lengthy confinements in medical institutions in Switzerland and Paris have increased in frequency. To Tunisians and outside observers as well, it has become readily apparent that the reins of power have steadily passed from the ailing Supreme Combatant, who secured national independence from the French, to his chosen successor, Prime Minister Nouira. Dissatisfaction in political circles with Nouira's hardline untraconservative approach to national problems has sparked rumors—in some cases backed by firm evidence—of maneuvering designed to ensure control in the eventual aftermath of Bourguiba's relinquishment of authority.

Speculation has arisen, however, that the question of presidential succession may not be resolved simply by political maneuvering and control of legitimate institutions of power. Even before the violence of Black Thursday, former Foreign Minister Mohamed Masmoudi in a Beirut newspaper interview stated that civil war or a coup d'etat by the army might follow the demise of Bourguiba. In response to such a suggestion by a Paris correspondent after the January 1978 violence, Nouira said, "This makes me laugh! Tunisia is one of the few Arab countries where the army has never intervened in politics." True enough, the military establishment has remained virtually apolitical, at least in its outward apperances, since it was formed after independence in 1956. Nonetheless, many observers agreed that in any internal struggle for power the army—particularly the younger officers—remains an important, if unknown, factor. It has been reported that as the pressures surrounding the succession question have mounted, the TNA commander has been careful to exercise firm control over the armed forces and to cultivate the allegiance of key influential officers. While such moves may only reflect the general's professional responsibility for the readiness of his troops in support of the government, he has been known to remind his supporters that the TNA may one day have an important role to play. Moreover, he has told them that the military must be able to assert itself in the event of a threatening political conflct.

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While there are no definitive studies describing in sufficient detail the entire scope of national security in contemporary Tunisia, several works provide significant parts of the overall theme. A valuable contribution to the understanding of Tunisian military policies and development through the late 1960s is Jacob C. Hurewitz's *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension,* published in 1969. Jeswald W. Salacuse's *An Introduction to Law in French-Speaking Africa, II: North Africa* provides a clear defini-

tion and description of the legal codes of the Tunisian criminal justice system.

No analysis of Tunisian national security affairs using publicly available sources would be possible without the use of the International Institute for Strategic Studies' excellent annual, *The Military Balance*. The same is true of the detailed annual, *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents*, edited by the noted British Africanist, Colin Legum, and the comprehensive and reliable SIPRI yearbooks, *World Armaments and Disarmament*, published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Readers who wish to update their understanding of Tunisian national security matters will also appreciate the usefulness of such periodicals as *Arab Report and Record*, *African Research Bulletin*, *Middle East Economic Digest*, *Jeune Afrique*, and *Marchés Tropicaux et Méditerranéens*. (For further information see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

1 Conversion Coefficients and Factors
2 Population by Governorate and Sex, 1975 Census
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4 Estimated Nonagricultural Employment, 1972 and 1976, Including Percent of Females Employed, 1972
5 Selected Housing Data, 1975 Census
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10 Composition of Exports, 1972–77
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Table 1. Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m²)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Population by Governorate and Sex, 1975 Census

Governorate	Male	Female	Total Population	Percent of Total
Al Kaf	117,674	115,481	233,155	4.2
Al Mahdiyah	108,986	109,231	218,217	3.9
Al Munastir	113,371	109,779	223,150	4.0
Al Qasrayn	121,499	117,000	238,499	4.3
Al Qayrawan	173,992	164,485	338,477	6.1
Bajah	127,567	121,203	248,770	4.4
Banzart	176,155	167,553	343,708	6.1
Jundubah	152,929	146,773	299,702	5.4
Madaniyin	144,810	148,160	292,970	5.2
Nabul	189,196	178,918	368,114	6.6
Qabis	127,084	128,633	255,717	4.6
Qafsah	121,472	116,372	237,844	4.2
Safaqis	240,688	234,191	474,879	8.5
Sidi Bu Zayd	112,381	106,130	218,511	3.9
Silyanah	98,755	93,913	192,668	3.4
Susah	127,422	127,179	254,601	4.6
Tunis	480,738	463,392	944,130	16.9
Tunis-Sud	106,194	98,903	205,097	3.7
TOTAL	2,840,913	2,747,296	5,588,209	100.0

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Ministère du Plan. Institut National de la Statistique. "Recensement Général de la Population et des Logements, 8 Mai 1975," Tunis, table 2.

Table 3. Annual Growth Rate of Population by Governorate, 1966–75

Governorate	1966	1975[1]	Annual Growth Rate (in percent)
Northern Tunisia[2]			
Al Kaf	202,372	227,255	1.3
Al Qayrawan	265,400	332,094	2.5
Bajah	215,520	243,961	1.4
Banzart	294,258	346,445	1.9
Jundubah	257,728	288,989	1.6
Nabul	280,200	371,706	3.2
Silyanah	169,021	184,801	1.0
Tunis	732,994	970,438	3.2
Tunis-Sud	165,030	201,971	2.3
Total Northern Tunisia	2,582,523	3,167,660	
Central Tunisia[2]			
Al Mahdiyah	171,000	213,854	2.5
Al Munastir	177,120	224,235	2.7
Al Qasrayn	189,746	236,132	2.5
Qafsah	194,580	237,544	2.2
Safaqis	390,554	472,726	2.2
Sidi Bu Zayd	171,100	213,115	2.5
Susah	207,746	263,595	2.7
Total Central Tunisia	1,501,846	1,861,201	
Southern Tunisia[2]			
Madaniyin	243,738	290,075	2.0
Qabis	205,244	253,293	2.4
Total Southern Tunisia	448,982	543,368	
TOTAL	4,533,351	5,572,229	2.3

[1] Preliminary analysis of census figures.

[2] Boundaries of regions do not correspond exactly to those of governorates.

Source: Based on information from "Initial Results of the Census of Population and Dwelling," *Al Amal*, Tunis, July 6, 1975 (U.S. Department of Commerce, JPRS: 65440, No. 1393, August 12, 1975), pp. 44–49.

Table 4. Estimated Nonagricultural Employment, 1972 and 1976, Including Percent of Females Employed, 1972

Sector	1972	Percent Female	1976	Percent Increase 1972–76
Industry				
Mining and Energy	25,300	0.0	28,100	11.1
Manufacturing				
Agricultural and food industries	35,600	15.2	38,900	9.3
Textiles, clothing, and leather	79,000	51.9	106,000	34.2
Wood, cork, and furniture	9,200	1.1	10,700	16.3
Paper, printing, and other	7,700	5.2	10,700	39.0
Chemicals and rubber	7,600	7.9	8,600	13.2
Building materials	18,200	0.5	21,700	19.2
Mechanical and electrical	13,700	3.6	15,200	10.9
Total Manufacturing	171,000	28.1	211,800	23.9
Construction and Public Works	55,000	0.0	74,000	34.5
Total Industry	251,300	19.1	313,900	24.9
Services				
Tourism	19,900	10.5	33,500	68.3
Transport and telecommunications	42,900	2.8	49,000	14.1
Commerce, banking, and insurance	83,000	14.6	93,000	12.0
Administration	116,600	10.3	136,000	16.6
Personal and other services	69,000	23.0	80,000	15.9
Total Services	331,400	14.5	391,500	18.1
TOTAL	582,700	15.5	705,400	21.0

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Secretariat of State for Information, *Tunisia Moves Ahead,* Tunis, 1976, p. 99; and Mahmoud Seklani, *La Population de la Tunisie,* Tunis, 1974, 158–160.

Table 5. Selected Housing Data, 1975 Census

Category	Percent
Kind of Tenancy	
Owner occupied	66.4
Tenant occupied	10.5
Occupied rent free	9.9
Other occupancy, including vacant	13.2
	100.0
Kind of Construction	
"Maison Arabe" (Arab-style house) and similar	61.8
Gourbi (clay block construction)	16.9
"Villa" and "at level of villa"	10.2
Apartment unit	4.3
Wattle	2.4
Tent	1.4
Cave	1.1
Other	1.9
	100.0
Kind of Construction Materials for Walls	
Clay brick or stone	62.5
Stone with clay	19.5
Clay	9.8
Other	8.2
	100.0
Facilities	
Separate kitchen	44.3
Toilet	43.3
Electric light	34.2
Running water (including outside connections)	26.4
Well	12.6
Cistern	11.3
Adequacy of Housing Units	
"Livable"	75.0
"Rudimentary"	25.0
	100.0

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Ministère du Plan. Institut National de la Statistique, "Recensement Général de la Population et des Logements, 1975, I: Logements," Tunis, pp. 33–83.

Table 6. Student Enrollment, School Years 1957, 1973, and 1977

Level	1957	1973	1977	Percent Change 1973–77
Primary	226,919	882,587	999,400	+13.2
Secondary				
First cycle	n.a.	85,575	84,908	−0.7
Second cycle	n.a.	58,251	56,702	−2.6
Vocational cycle	n.a.	18,420	41,342	+124.4
Technical cycle	n.a.	9,668	17,196	+77.8
Total Secondary	32,924	171,914	200,148	+16.4
Higher Education	2,140	10,646	21,470	+101.6
TOTAL	261,983	1,065,147	1,221,018	+14.6

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Secretariat of State for Information, *Tunisia Moves Ahead*, Tunis, 1976, p. 275; and Charles Debbasch and Michel Camau, "La Tunisie," *Encyclopédie politique et constitutionnelle* (Série Afrique), Paris, 1973, p. 237.

Table 7. University of Tunis, Selected Data, 1975

Founded	1960
Location	Campus located three kilometers from center of city; some units at other sites in metropolitan area
Languages of Instruction	French and Arabic
Academic Year	October to June (two semesters)
Publications	*Cahiers de Tunisie* (each semester) *Annales de l'Université de Tunis* (annual)
Academic Subdivisions	Faculty of Mathematics, Physics, and Natural Science Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences Faculty of Law, Political, and Economic Sciences Faculty of Theology and Religious Science Faculty of Medicine
Attached Schools and Institutes	Institute of Higher Commercial Studies Institute of Scientific and Technical Research National Institute of Carcinology Center of Economic and Social Studies and Research Bourguiba Institute of Modern Languages[1] Higher Institute of Business Administration Institute of Press and Information Sciences Higher Normal School Higher Normal School for Technical Instruction National Engineering School of Tunis National Institute of Educational Sciences[2]

[1] Provides classes for adults in English, Arabic, French, German, Spanish, and Russian; about 5,000 students in 1975.

[2] Conducts research into oral methods of teaching French and Arabic, training of primary teachers, and teaching techniques; operates medical-psychological-pedagogical center; maintains closed-circuit television system.

Source: Based on information from *The World of Learning, 1975–76*, London, 1975, vol. II, p. 1186.

Table 8. Gross Domestic Product by Sector, 1970–76
(in percent)

Sector	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Agriculture and fishing	19.3	21.7	24.1	21.6	21.5	19.9	20.5
Government	15.8	14.3	12.7	13.2	11.9	12.4	13.3
Commerce	12.5	13.1	13.7	13.5	11.7	12.2	12.3
Manufacturing	9.2	9.4	10.4	10.3	11.3	10.2	11.0
Petroleum and mining	6.2	6.5	5.7	7.4	13.0	11.2	7.8
Construction	7.5	6.9	6.5	7.3	7.3	8.9	9.8
Miscellaneous services	9.3	9.3	9.4	9.3	8.0	8.4	9.0
Transportation and communications	7.6	6.1	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.5	5.6
Housing	7.8	7.0	6.2	6.2	4.9	4.8	4.6
Tourism	2.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.4	4.8	4.5
Electricity, gas, and water	2.0	1.9	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.6
TOTAL*	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Figures may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

Table 9. Production of Selected Commodities, 1972–77
(in thousands of tons except as noted)

Product	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Natural gas[1]	19,856	113,784	210,500	214,000	250,000	n.a.
Esparto grass	75	58	75[2]	75[2]	75[2]	n.a.
Barley	245	210	171	190	230	n.a.
Cement	629	528	533	616	478	680
Citrus fruits	120	75	100	131	163	200
Crude oil	3,966	3,878	4,140	4,609	3,710	n.a.
Dates	60	50	52	60	50	45
Iron ore	890	809	818	616	494	400[2]
Lead	32	25	18	17	17	18[2]
Olive oil	167	70	130	117	150	80
Peppers	81	90	103	115	124[2]	n.a.
Phosphates	3,387	3,474	3,800	3,512	3,301	3,600
Potatoes	100	80	100	110	105	85
Sugar beets	31	32	45	52	83	120
Tomatoes	177	220	180	256	250	320
Wheat	965	690	755	1,010	920	n.a.
Wine	105	95	112	96	58	92
Zinc	10	9	7	11	13	n.a.

n.a.—not available.
[1] Thousands of cubic meters.
[2] Estimate.

Table 10. Composition of Exports, 1972–77
(in millions of Tunisian dinars)[1]

Product	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Crude oil	38.8	52.1	136.9	144.6	138.5	161.0
Phosphates	20.0	23.4	81.4	69.6	38.3	38.2
Olive oil	47.1	26.2	71.7	31.3	36.3	25.9
Textiles and garments	4.1	6.5	16.4	21.3	30.7	---[2]
Superphosphates	9.6	12.0	33.8	16.7	14.4	---[2]
Phosphoric acid	2.5	4.8	15.4	14.7	19.7	---[2]
Wine and spirits	3.1	9.4	6.5	7.0	6.4	---[2]
Sugar	2.5	2.3	2.8	9.4	6.0	---[2]
Lead	3.1	4.4	6.2	3.6	3.5	---[2]
Other	29.7	37.7	26.6	27.4	44.5	169.9
TOTAL	160.5	178.8	397.7	345.6	338.3	395.0

[1] For value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary.
[2] Included in Other.

Table 11. Composition of Imports, 1972–76
(in millions of Tunisian dinars)[1]

Category	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976[3]
Capital goods	65.8	80.0	112.4	172.8	210
Raw materials and semifinished goods	66.4	83.6	166.4	165.5	176
Consumer goods	32.9	36.1	63.0	87.7	93
Fuels	17.9	23.3	56.8	56.3	60
Cereals	12.1	15.8	22.5	20.1	19
Other foodstuffs	30.8	32.3	67.5	70.4	52
Other	9.0	14.9	0.1	0.0	46
TOTAL	234.9	286.0	488.7	572.8	656

[1] For value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary.
[3] Preliminary.

Table 12. Executive Branch of Government, August 1978

Name	Position
Habib Bourguiba	President of the Republic (head of state, head of government)
Habib Bourguiba, Jr.	Special Adviser to the President
Hedi Nouira	Prime Minister
Mohamed Sayah	Minister Delegate (attached to the Prime Minister)
Mustapha Zaanouni	Minister Delegate for Planning (attached to the Prime Minister)
Mohamed Fitouri	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Abdulla Farhat	Minister of Defense
Rashid Sfar	Minister of Industry, Mines, and Energy
Slaheddine Mbarke	Minister of Trade
Mongi Ben Hamida	Minister of Health
Chedli Klibi	Minister of Cultural Affairs and Information
Abdelaziz Mathari	Minister of Finance
Slaheddine Bali	Minister of Justice
Dhaqui Hannablia	Minister of the Interior
Hassan Belkhodja	Minister of Agriculture
Mohamed M'Zali	Minister of Education
Abdelhamid Saffi	Minister of Transport and Communications
Lassaad Ben Osman	Minister of Supply
Mohamed Jomaa	Minister of Social Affairs
Fouad M'Baza	Minister of Youth and Sports
Othman Kecherid	Minister in Charge of Relations Between the Government and the National Assembly
Larbi Mallakh	Secretary of State for Supply
Ibrahim Turki	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Hedi Zeghala	Secretary of State for Education
Mustapha Masmoudi	Secretary of State for Information (attached to the Prime Minister)
Noureddine Ktari	Secretary of State for Vocational Training (attached to the Minister of Social Affairs)

Table 13. Major Domestic Political Publications, 1978

Publication	Language	Publisher	Approximate Circulation (mid-1978)	Frequency of Publication
L'Action	French	Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD)	32,000	Daily
Al Amal	Arabic	---do---	25,000	Do.
Ech Chaab (also transliterated *Ach Chaab*, *Al Shaab*, and *El Chaab*)	---do---	General Tunisian Labor Union (Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail—UGTT)	n.a.	Weekly
Ach Chabab	---do---	Tunisian Youth Union (Union Tunisienne de la Jeunesse—UTJ)	n.a.	Monthly
Dialogue	French	PSD	n.a.	Weekly
Essabah (also transliterated *Al Sabah* and *Assabah*)	Arabic	Private	50,000	Daily
L'Etudiant Tunisien	French	General Union of Tunisian Students (Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens—UGET)	n.a.	Quarterly
Al Maraa	Arabic	National Union of Tunisian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes—UNFT)	10,000	Monthly
Le Temps	French	Private	n.a.	Daily

Table 13. Continued

Publication	Language	Publisher	Approximate Circulation (mid-1978)	Frequency of Publication
		Opposition Press		
Démocratie	French	Hasib Ben Ammar (said to be the organ of Ahmed Mestiri's quasi-political party, the Movement of Social Democrats)	n.a.	Weekly
Al Hurriyal	Arabic	Members of the Baathist movement	n.a.	n.a.
Ar Rai (also transliterated *Errai*)	---do---	Ben Ammar; represents views of social democratic followers of Mestiri	55,000	Weekly
Tunisian Perspectives	n.a.	Tunisian Perspectives group	n.a.	n.a.
Tunisian Worker	n.a.	Tunisian Worker group	n.a.	n.a.
L'Unité Populaire	French	Movement of Popular Unity (Mouvement d'Unité Populaire—MUP)	n.a.	n.a.

n.a.—not available.

Table 14. Defense Expenditures and Military Manpower, 1966–78

Year	Defense Expenditure (in millions of United States dollars)	Defense as Percent of Total Expenditure	Defense as Percent of GNP[1]	Military Manpower[2]	Paramilitary Forces
1966	26	n.a.	1.3	17,000	5,000
1967	32	4.7	1.4	18,000	5,000
1968	36	6.9	1.5	21,050	5,000
1969	34	4.3	1.3	21,050	5,000
1970	43	5.4	1.6	21,050	5,000
1971	44	5.8	1.4	21,550	10,000
1972	49	6.0	1.4	24,000	10,000
1973	49	5.2	1.4	24,000	10,000
1974	54	5.1	1.4	24,000	10,000
1975	68	5.5	1.6	24,000	9,000
1976	84	5.9	1.7	20,000	9,500
1977	90	5.9	1.7	22,200	9,000
1978	153[3]	6.0[3]	n.a.	22,200	9,000

n.a.—not available.
[1] Gross national product.
[2] Does not include reserves.
[3] Budget allocations only.

Source: Based on information from U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1967–1976*, Washington, July 1978, p. 65; and International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, London, 1966 through 1978.

Table 15. Major Army Weapons, 1978

Type and Description	Country of Origin	In Inventory
Tanks		
AMX–13	France	33
M–41 Walker Bulldog	United States	20
Armored cars		
Saladin	United Kingdom	20
Panhard EBR–75	France	15
Panhard AML–60	---do---	13
M–8 Greyhound	United States	10
Artillery		
155–mm gun	---do---	10
155–mm field howitzer	West Germany[1]	Unknown
105–mm AMX self-propelled gun	France	10
Antiaircraft weapons		
40–mm AA gun	United States	Unknown
Chaparral SAM	---do---	30[2]
Antiarmor weapons		
Kuerassier self-propelled antitank gun	Austria	45[2]

[1] Federal Republic of Germany.
[2] On order.

Table 16. Major Air Force Weapons, 1978

Type and Description	Country of Origin	In Inventory
Fighters		
North American F–86F	United States	10
Northrop F–5E Tiger II	---do---	12[1]
Ground Attack Weapons		
Aermacchi MB–326B light jet configured for COIN[2] operations; combined trainer function	Italy	8[3]
Transports		
Aeritalia G222 twin turboprop medium	---do---	3
Aermacchi AL.60 Conestoga light utility	---do---	Unknown[4]
Dassault MD–315 Flamant	France	3
Nord 2501 Noratlas	---do---	3
Helicopters		
Sud Alouette II	---do---	6
Aerospatiale Alouette III	---do---	6
Aerospatiale SA330 Puma	---do---	1
Trainers		
North American T–6	France, United States	12
Marchetti SF.260W Warrior	Italy	12
Saab 91D Safir	Sweden	12
Missiles		
Hughes AGM–65A Maverick ASM	United States	---[5]
Raytheon AIM–9J–1 Sidewinder AAM	---do---	---[5]

[1] On provisional order.
[2] Counterinsurgency.
[3] Twelve on order.
[4] More than one.
[5] Unknown number on order for F–5Es.

Table 17. Major Navy Weapons, 1978

Type and Description	Country of Origin	In Inventory
Frigate		
Bourguiba, converted U.S.S. *Edsall*-class radar picket (two 76–mm and two 20–mm antiaircraft guns, one anti-submarine warfare Hedgehog)	United States	1
Corvettes		
Fougeux class (one 40–mm gun, two 20–mm guns, one Hedgehog, four depth charge projectors)	France	1
Aviso class A–69, designed for anti-submarine warfare (one 105–mm gun, one 40–mm and four 20–mm antiaircraft guns, depth charge projectors)	---do---	2
Mine Warfare Vessels		
Coastal minesweeper, U.S.S. *Acacia* class	---do---	1
Coastal Patrol Vessels		
Patrol boat (less than 100 tons) for coastal surveillance, armed with one 20–mm gun	---do---	10
P–48-class fast patrol boat (250 tons) for coastal use (two 40–mm antiaircraft guns, eight SS.12M ship-to-shore missiles)	---do---	4
Vosper Thornycroft (220 tons) fast patrol boat (deck gun and ship-to-shore missiles)	United Kingdom	1
Yu Lin-class coastal patrol boat	People's Republic of China	2

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Chapter 1

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Glossary

al—Arabic definite article "the"; connotes family or group to which an individual belongs or region of origin.

baraka—Quality of blessedness or grace found characteristically in marabouts (*q.v.*) and other divinely favored persons. Also, charisma that endows the blessed with a special capacity to rule.

BDET—Banque de Développement Economique de Tunisie (Economic Development Bank of Tunisia). Development finance company with mixed ownership providing medium- and long-term loans for industry and tourism.

ben—Literally, "son of"; used before or as part of proper name to indicate patrilineal descent. Also seen as *ibn*. *Beni* (also *banu* or *bani*) is literally "sons of" and is used to designate "tribe of" or "family of."

BNT—Banque Nationale de Tunisie (National Bank of Tunisia). Specialized bank with partial government ownership providing credit for agricultural enterprises.

BOP—Brigade de l'Ordre Publique (Brigade of Public Order). American-trained paramilitary riot control unit of the Sûreté Nationale (*q.v.*).

Bourguibism—Term used to describe the pragmatic methodology, humanistic philosophy, and political ethics advocated by Habib Bourguiba.

cadi (pl., *cudah*)—Islamic judge who presides over the sharia (*q.v.*) court. Also seen as *qadi*.

caid (pl., *caada*)—District or tribal area chief or governor. Primary historical function was that of collecting taxes.

Civilian Service (Service Civile)—Public service corps composed of unemployed youth conscripted for one-year terms for training and work in areas of labor shortage and on government development projects.

colon—A colonial farmer or plantation owner.

CTN—Compagnie Tunisienne de Navigation (Tunisian Shipping Company). National shipping enterprise operating entire Tunisian merchant fleet; controlling interest owned by the government.

Destourian socialism—Tunisia's official political ideology which, in its synthesis of Bourguibism (*q.v.*) and the concept of centralized state economic planning and intervention, closely resembles British Fabian socialism.

ETAP—Enterprise Tunisienne d'Activités Pétrolières (Tunisian Company for Petroleum Activities). State-controlled petroleum industry.

évolué—Literally, "evolved one." A gallicized Muslim educated in French schools.

FNED—Fédération Nationale des Etudiants Destouriens (National Federation of Destourian Students). Former name of stu-

dent group founded by PSD (*q.v.*) as rival to UGET (*q.v.*). Became National Federation of Destourian Socialist Students.

Garde Nationale—Gendarmerie responsible for law enforcement in rural areas.

habus—Islamic religious endowment or trust (usually real estate) used to support mosques, schools, and charitable works. Sometimes seen as *habous* or *hubus;* occurs as *waqf* outside the Maghrib (*q.v.*).

Hadith—Literally, "the right path." Islamic writings containing the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as recalled by those who had known him during his life.

Ifriquiya—Arabic transliteration of the word *Africa*. Historically, the region involved was confined to territory comprising modern Tunisia and northeastern Algeria.

IMF—International Monetary Fund. Specialized agency established in 1945 to maintain international currency rates and strengthen national reserves through the sale of foreign exchange under adequate safeguards to countries with balance-of-payments deficits. Associated with the United Nations under a mutual cooperation agreement since 1947.

jihad—According to Islamic doctrine, the permanent struggle to establish the law of God on earth, often interpreted to mean "holy war." Modern Muslims construe the concept in the broader context of civil and personal action.

Mashriq—Eastern Islamic world, in contrast to the Maghrib (*q.v.*).

Maghrib—The western Islamic world (northwest Africa) and distinguished from the Mashriq, or eastern Islamic world (the Middle East). Traditionally includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and the northwestern portion of Libya known historically as Tripolitania. Literally, "the time or place of the sunset—the west." For its Arab conquerors, the region was the "island of the West" (*jazirat al maghrib*), the land between the "sea of sand" (Sahara) and the Mediterranean Sea. Also transliterated as "Maghreb."

marabout—In North Africa a holy man, often a Sufi mystic, and teacher venerated locally in rural areas and believed to be touched by divine grace, or *baraka* (*q.v.*), which sometimes conferred the right to rule as well. Frequently called upon to arbitrate tribal disputes, the marabout was not usually a member of the ulama (*q.v.*). Transliteration of *al murabutim* (those who have made a religious retreat); popularly called *ryal al bilad* (men of the soil, earth, or countryside).

Mauretania—Classical name for the ancient Berber kingdom in northwest Africa and Roman provinces that succeeded it. Cited in some sources as Mauritania but not to be confused with the modern Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

MUP—Mouvement d'Unité Populaire (Movement of Popular Unity). Left-wing socialist opposition movement.

PCT—Parti Communiste Tunisien (Tunisian Communist Party). Traditional Marxist-Leninist organization, recognized by Moscow as the official communist party in Tunisia; suppressed in 1963.

PSD—Parti Socialiste Destourien (Destourian Socialist Party). Name adopted by the Neo-Destour Party in 1964.

Quran—Islamic scriptures believed by Muslims to be God's (Allah's) revelation to the Prophet Muhammad. Derived from the Arabic verb *qaraa* (to recite or to read). Commonly written as "Koran."

SADR—Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. Name given to Western Sahara (former Spanish Sahara) by indigenous independence movement, which with Algerian aid was engaged in a guerrilla war against armed forces of Morocco and Mauritania after the area was partitioned and controlled by those countries in 1976.

Sahil—Region in eastern Tunisia. Literally, the "shore" or "coast."

shahadah—Literally, "testimony." Islamic profession of faith: "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet."

sharia—Traditional code of Islamic law, both civil and criminal, based in part on the Quran (*q.v.*). Also drawn from the Hadith (*q.v.*); the consensus of Islamic belief (*ijma;* that is, the faith as it is held by the faithful at any given time); and analogy (*qiyas;* that is, an elaboration of the intent of law).

SNCFT—Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Tunisiens (Tunisian National Railroad Company). State corporation responsible for operating the nationalized Tunisian rail system.

SOGITEX—Société Générale de l'Industrie Textile (General Textile Industry Corporation). State-owned textile industry.

souk—Traditional North African bazaarlike open-air market.

STIA—Société Tunisienne d'Industrie Automobile (Tunisian Automobile Industry Corporation). Government-owned automobile assembly operation and parts manufacturing enterprise.

the Sudan—Historical geographic region stretching across Africa from Cape Verde on the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea between 8° and 16° north latitude; characterized by savannah and semiarid steppe. Term derived from Arabic *bilad al sudan* (literally, "country of the blacks"). Not to be confused with the Republic of Sudan.

sunna—Body of customs and practices based on the Prophet Muhammad's words and deeds as found in the Quran (*q.v.*) and the Hadith (*q.v.*), which serve as guides to proper behavior for Muslims.

Sunni—The larger of the two great divisions of Islam. The Sunni consider themselves the orthodox adherents of the sunna (*q.v.*).

Sûreté Nationale—National police force with primary responsibility for law enforcement in principal cities and other urban centers.

TD—Tunisian dinar. Unit of currency since 1968; divided into

1,000 millimes. Buying and selling rates for foreign currencies are established daily. In mid-1978 TD1 was valued at US$2.47; exchange rate approximately TD0.41 per US$1.

TNA—Tunisian National Army; collective title for entire Tunisian defense establishment.

UGET—Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens (General Union of Tunisian Students). Autonomous student organization founded clandestinely under the auspices of the Neo-Destour Party in 1952. Membership was divided between pro- and anti-PSD (*q.v.*) factions during 1970s.

UGTT—Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (General Tunisian Labor Union). Labor federation, comprised of several member unions, which from the early 1970s until January 1978 offered serious, well-organized opposition to the Bourguiba regime.

ulama (sing., *alim*)—Collective term for Muslim religious scholars learned in the Quran (*q.v.*) and responsible for interpreting and elaborating on the sharia (*q.v.*). Derived from Arabic verb *alama* (to know).

UNFT—Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes (National Union of Tunisian Women). National women's organization; provides courses in general education, hygiene, and family planning and assists in medical programs.

UTJ—Union Tunisienne de la Jeunesse (Tunisian Youth Union). Administrative organ of PSD (*q.v.*) that coordinates activities of various party student and youth groups.

World Bank—Popular title for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Specialized agency of the United Nations providing loans and technical assistance for economic development projects in member nations. The International Finance Corporation (IFC), an investment fund affiliated with the World Bank, is a major shareholder in the BDET (*q.v.*).

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